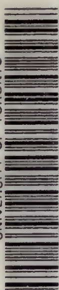
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THE

BRITISH NOVELISTS;

WITH

AN ESSAY;

AND

PREFACES,

BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL,

BY

MRS. BARBAULD.

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THE

MAN OF FEELING:

AND

JULIA DE ROUBIGNÉ,

A TALE,

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS.

BY HENRY MACKENZIE, Esq.

MACKENZIE.

WITH the readers of sentimental novels, those of Mr. Mackenzie have been great favourites. They exhibit real powers of pathos, though the judicious reader will probably be of opinion that at the time they were published they were somewhat overrated. They imitate the manner of Sterne, who was then much in fashion, and whose light and delicate touches of nature had made so strong an impression that it raised a kind of school of writers in that walk.

The very title of *The Man of Feeling* sufficiently indicates that the writer means to take strong aim at the heart of the reader. It is difficult, however, to form a clear and consistent idea of the character of the hero of the piece. The author has given him extreme sensibility, but of that timid and melancholy cast which nearly incapacitates a man for the duties of life and the energies of action. The general impression upon the reader is that of a man "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought," languid and delicate; yet he is also supposed to be animated by that ardent and impetuous enthusiasm which acts by sudden and irresistible impulses,

and disregards every maxim of prudence: in short, a temperament like that of Mr. Cumberland's *West-Indian.*

When Harley is about to relieve the prostitute, to whom, by the way, he had given half-a-guinea the night before, and who could not therefore be in any immediate danger of perishing, he was in such a hurry that, "though two vibrations of a pendulum would have served him to lock his bureau, they could not be spared." Yet with these lively and ungovernable feelings, this man of sensibility, being deeply in love with a young lady, who seems all along to have had a very tender partiality for him, allows himself to languish and pine away without declaring his passion; and at length dies, whether of love or of a consumption is not very clear, without having made any effort to obtain her hand. We are not more active in serving others than in serving ourselves: such a one might be "a man of feeling," but his benevolence would be confined to mere sensations. Yet the last chapter, entitled, *The Man of Feeling made happy*, the reader will find, at least if he happen to be in a tender mood, pathetic. Harley, in the last stage of weakness, has an interview with his mistress, in which he receives an avowal of her regard for him, and then dies contented.

But by far the most interesting part of this novel is the story of Edwards, particularly the scene where he is taken by the press-gang. It would be a good subject for the painter. It deserves the pencil of Mr. Wilkie. The whole harmless family are represented in high glee,

playing at blind-man's buff; young Edwards, with his eyes covered, is trying to guess which of them he has caught, when the ruffian's voice bursts upon him like thunder, and overwhelms them all with despair. Yet, in endeavouring to draw as many tears as he can from his readers, an author of this class is apt to represent the virtuous and industrious in low life as continually exposed to oppression and injustice, and it is hardly to be wished that even our virtuous feelings should be awakened at the expense of truth. There is no connected story in this work, except that of Edwards. The thread of the history is supposed to be broken by the imperfection of the manuscript. A convenient supposition.

Julia de Roubigné is in the same cast of tender sorrow, but has the advantage of a connected story, which, though simple, has much effect. The scenes of domestic life, and the affections which belong to them, are in many places beautifully touched; but an uniform hue of sadness pervades the whole. The sentiments are all pure, and the style exhibits fewer marks of imitation than the former work. It is in general elegant, though here and there a negligent expression occurs, as, "he was abed," for "he was in bed," "he used to joke me." Upon the whole, though these two novels have obtained great celebrity, at least in their day, they still fall short of the exquisitely beautiful story of *La Roche*, by the same author, published in *The Mirror*.

INTRODUCTION.

MY dog had made a point on a piece of fallow-ground, and led the curate and me two or three hundred yards over that and some stubble adjoining, in a breathless state of expectation, on a burning first of September.

It was a false point, and our labour was vain: yet, to do Rover justice (for he's an excellent dog, though I have lost his pedigree), the fault was none of his, the birds were gone: the curate showed me the spot where they had lain basking, at the root of an old hedge.

I stopped and cried Hem! The curate is fatter than I; he wiped the sweat from his brow.

There is no state where one is apter to pause and look round one, than after such a disappointment. It is even so in life. When we have been hurrying on, impelled by some warm wish or other, looking neither to the right hand nor to the left—we find of a sudden that all our gay hopes are flown; and the only slender consolation that some friend can give us, is to point where they were once to be found. And lo! if we are not of that combustible race, who will rather beat their heads in spite, than wipe their brows with the curate, we look round and say, with the nauseated

listlessness of the king of Israel, 'All is vanity and vexation of spirit.'

I looked round with some such grave apophthegm in my mind, when I discovered for the first time a venerable pile, to which the inclosure belonged. An air of melancholy hung about it. There was a languid stillness in the day, and a single crow, that perched on an old tree by the side of the gate, seemed to delight in the echo of its own croaking.

I leaned on my gun and looked; but I had not breath enough to ask the curate a question. I observed carving on the bark of some of the trees; 'twas indeed the only mark of human art about the place, except that some branches appeared to have been lopped, to give a view of the cascade, which was formed by a little rill at some distance.

Just at that instant I saw pass between the trees a young lady with a book in her hand. I stood upon a stone to observe her; but the curate sat him down on the grass, and, leaning his back where I stood, told me, That was the daughter of a neighbouring gentleman, of the name of Walton, whom he had seen walking there more than once.

Some time ago, he said, one Harley lived there, a whimsical sort of a man, I am told, but I was not then in the cure; though, if I had a turn for those things, I might know a good deal of his history, for the greatest part of it is still in my possession.

His history! said I. Nay, you may call it what you please, said the curate; for indeed it is no more a

history than it is a sermon. The way I came by it was this: some time ago, a grave oddish kind of a man boarded at a farmer's in this parish. The country people called him The Ghost; and he was known by the slouch in his gait, and the length of his stride. I was but little acquainted with him, for he never frequented any of the clubs hereabouts. Yet for all he used to walk a-nights, he was as gentle as a lamb at times; for I have seen him playing at te-totum with the children, on the great stone at the door of our churchyard.

Soon after I was made curate, he left the parish, and went nobody knows whither; and in his room was found a bundle of papers, which was brought to me by his landlord. I began to read them, but I soon grew weary of the task; for, besides that the hand is intolerably bad, I could never find the author in one strain for two chapters together; and I don't believe there's a single syllogism from beginning to end.

I should be glad to see this medley, said I. You shall see it now, answered the curate, for I always take it along with me a-shooting. How came it so torn? 'Tis excellent wadding, said the curate.—This was a plea of expediency I was not in a condition to answer; for I had actually in my pocket great part of an edition of one of the German Illustrissimi, for the very same purpose. We exchanged books; and by that means (for the curate was a strenuous logician) we probably saved both.

When I returned to town, I had leisure to peruse

the acquisition I had made: I found it a bundle of little episodes, put together without art, and of no importance on the whole, with something of nature, and little else in them I was a good deal affected with some very trifling passages in it; and had the name of a Marmontel or a Richardson been on the title-page ——'tis odds that I should have wept: But

One is ashamed to be pleased with the works of one knows not whom.

THE

MAN OF FEELING.

CHAPTER XI.*

Of bashfulness—a character.—His opinion on that subject.

THERE is some rust about every man at the beginning; though in some nations (among the French, for instance) the ideas of the inhabitants, from climate, or what other cause you will, are so vivacious, so eternally on the wing, that they must, even in small societies, have a frequent collision; the rust therefore will wear off sooner: but in Britain it often goes with a man to his grave; nay, he dares not even pen a *hic jacet* to speak out for him after his death.

Let them rub it off by travel, said the baronet's brother, who was a striking instance of excellent metal shamefully rusted. I had drawn my chair near his. Let me paint the honest old man: 'tis but one passing sentence to preserve his image in my mind.

He sat in his usual attitude, with his elbow rested on his knee, and his fingers pressed on his cheek. His face was shaded by his hand; yet it was a face that

* The reader will remember that the Editor is accountable only for scattered chapters, and fragments of chapters; the curate must answer for the rest. The number at the top, when the chapter was entire, he has given as it originally stood, with the title which its author had affixed to it.

might once have been well accounted handsome; its features were manly and striking, and a certain dignity resided on his eyebrows, which were the largest I remember to have seen. His person was tall and well made; but the indolence of his nature had now inclined it to corpulency.

His remarks were few, and made only to his familiar friends; but they were such as the world might have heard with veneration: and his heart, uncorrupted by its ways, was ever warm in the cause of virtue and his friends.

He is now forgotten and gone! The last time I was at Silton-hall, I saw his chair stand in its corner by the fire-side; there was an additional cushion on it, and it was occupied by my young lady's favourite lap-dog. I drew near unperceived, and pinched its ears in the bitterness of my soul; the creature howled, and ran to its mistress. She did not suspect the author of its misfortune, but she bewailed it in the most pathetic terms; and kissing its lips, laid it gently on her lap, and covered it with a cambric handkerchief. I sat in my old friend's seat; I heard the roar of mirth and gaiety around me: poor Ben Silton! I gave thee a tear then: accept of one cordial drop that falls to thy memory now.

Let them rub it off by travel.—Why, it is true, said I, that will go far; but then it will often happen, that in the velocity of a modern tour, and amidst the materials through which it is commonly made, the friction is so violent, that not only the rust, but the metal too, will be lost in the progress.

Give me leave to correct the expression of your metaphor, said Mr. Silton: that is not always rust which is acquired by the inactivity of the body on which it preys; such, perhaps, is the case with me, though indeed I was never cleared from my youth; but (taking it in its first stage) it is rather an incrusta-

tion, which nature has given for purposes of the greatest wisdom.

You are right, I returned; and sometimes, like certain precious fossils, there may be hid under it gems of the purest brilliancy.

Nay, further, continued Mr. Silton, there are two distinct sorts of what we call bashfulness: this, the awkwardness of a booby, which a few steps into the world will convert into the pertness of a coxcomb; that, a consciousness, which the most delicate feelings produce, and the most extensive knowledge cannot always remove.

From the incidents I have already related, I imagine it will be concluded, that Harley was of the latter species of bashful animals: at least, if Mr. Silton's principle be just, it may be argued on this side: for the gradation of the first-mentioned sort, it is certain, he never attained. Some part of his external appearance was modelled from the company of those gentlemen, whom the antiquity of a family, now possessed of bare 250*l.* a year, entitled its representative to approach: these indeed were not many; great part of the property in his neighbourhood being in the hands of merchants, who had got rich by their lawful calling abroad, and the sons of stewards, who had got rich by their lawful calling at home: persons so perfectly versed in the ceremonial of thousands, tens of thousands, and hundreds of thousands, (whose degrees of precedency are plainly demonstrable from the first page of the Complete Accomptant, or Young Man's best Pocket Companion,) that a bow at church from them to such a man as Harley, would have made the parson look back into his sermon for some precept of christian humility.

CHAPTER XII

Of worldly interests.

There are certain interests which the world supposes every man to have, and which therefore are properly enough termed worldly; but the world is apt to make an erroneous estimate: ignorant of the dispositions which constitute our happiness or misery, it brings to an undistinguished scale the means of the one, as connected with power, wealth, or grandeur, and of the other with their contraries. Philososophers and poets have often protested against this decision; but their arguments have been despised as declamatory, or ridiculed as romantic.

There are never wanting to a young man some grave and prudent friends to set him right in this particular, if he need it; to watch his ideas as they arise, and point them to those objects which a wise man should never forget.

Harley did not want for some monitors of this sort. He was frequently told of men, whose fortunes enabled them to command all the luxuries of life, whose fortunes were of their own acquirement: his envy was invited by a description of their happiness, and his emulation by a recital of the means which had procured it.

Harley was apt to hear those lectures with indifference; nay, sometimes they got the better of his temper; and, as the instances were not always amiable, provoked, on his part, some reflections, which I am persuaded his good-nature would else have avoided.

Indeed, I have observed one ingredient, somewhat necessary in a man's composition towards happiness, which people of feeling would do well to acquire—a certain respect for the follies of mankind; for there

are so many fools whom the opinion of the world entitles to regard, whom accident has placed in heights of which they are unworthy, that he who cannot restrain his contempt or indignation at the sight, will be too often quarrelling with the disposal of things to relish that share which is allotted to himself I do not mean, however, to insinuate this to have been the case with Harley: on the contrary, if we might rely on his own testimony, the conceptions he had of pomp and grandeur served to endear the state which Providence had assigned him.

He lost his father, the last surviving of his parents, as I have already related, when he was a boy. The good man, from a fear of offending, as well as a regard to his son, had named him a variety of guardians; one consequence of which was, that they seldom met at all to consider the affairs of their ward; and when they did meet, their opinions were so opposite, that the only possible method of conciliation, was the mediatory power of a dinner and a bottle, which commonly interrupted, not ended the dispute; and, after that interruption ceased, left the consulting parties in a condition not very proper for adjusting it. His education therefore had been but indifferently attended to; and after being taken from a country school, at which he had been boarded, the young gentleman was suffered to be his own master in the subsequent branches of literature, with some assistance from the parson of the parish in languages and philosophy, and from the exciseman in arithmetic and book-keeping. One of his guardians, indeed, who, in his youth, had been an inhabitant of the Temple, set him to read Coke upon Lyttleton; a book which is very properly put into the hands of beginners in that science, as its simplicity is accommodated to their understandings, and its size to their inclinations. He profited but little by the perusal; but it was not without its use in the family: for his maiden

aunt applied it commonly to the laudable purpose of pressing her rebellious linens to the folds she had allotted them.

There were particularly two ways of increasing his fortune, which might have occurred to people of less foresight than the counsellors we have mentioned. One of these was, the prospect of his succeeding to an old lady, a distant relation, who was known to be possessed of a very large sum in the stocks: but in this their hopes were disappointed; for the young man was so untoward in his disposition, that, notwithstanding the instructions he daily received, his visits rather tended to alienate than gain the good-will of his kinswoman. He sometimes looked grave when the old lady told the jokes of her youth; he often refused to eat when she pressed him, and was seldom or never provided with sugar-candy or liquorice when she was seized with a fit of coughing; nay, he had once the rudeness to fall asleep, while she was describing the composition and virtues of her favourite colic-water. In short, he accommodated himself so ill to her humour, that she died, and did not leave him a farthing.

The other method pointed out to him was an endeavour to get a lease of some crown-lands, which lay contiguous to his little paternal estate. This, it was imagined, might be easily procured, as the crown did not draw so much rent as Harley could afford to give, with very considerable profit to himself; and the then lessee had rendered himself so obnoxious to the ministry, by the disposal of his vote at an election, that he could not expect a renewal. This, however, needed some interest with the great, which Harley or his father never possessed.

His neighbour, Mr. Walton, having heard of this affair, generously offered his assistance to accomplish it. He told him, that though he had long been a stranger to courtiers, yet he believed there were some

of them who might pay regard to his recommendation; and that, if he thought it worth the while to take a London-journey upon the business, he would furnish him with a letter of introduction to a baronet of his acquaintance, who had a great deal to say with the first lord of the treasury.

When his friends heard of this offer, they pressed him with the utmost earnestness to accept of it. They did not fail to enumerate the many advantages which a certain degree of spirit and assurance gives a man who would make a figure in the world: they repeated their instances of good fortune in others, ascribed them all to a happy forwardness of disposition; and made so copious a recital of the disadvantages which attend the opposite weakness, that a stranger, who had heard them, would have been led to imagine, that in the British code there was some disqualifying statute against any citizen who should be convicted of—modesty.

Harley, though he had no great relish for the attempt, yet could not resist the torrent of motives that assaulted him; and as he needed but little preparation for his journey, a day, not very distant, was fixed for his departure.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Man of Feeling in love.

The day before that on which he set out, he went to take leave of Mr. Walton.—We would conceal nothing:—there was another person of the family to whom also the visit was intended, on whose account, perhaps, there were some tenderer feelings in the bosom of Harley, than his gratitude for the friendly no-

tice of that gentleman (though he was seldom deficient in that virtue) could inspire. Mr. Walton had a daughter; and such a daughter! we will attempt some description of her by and by.

Harley's notions of the καλον, or beautiful, were not always to be defined, nor indeed such as the world would always assent to, though we could define them. A blush, a phrase of affability to an inferior, a tear at a moving tale, were to him, like the cestus of Cytherea, unequalled in conferring beauty. For all these Miss Walton was remarkable; but as these, like the above-mentioned cestus, are perhaps still more powerful when the wearer is possessed of some degree of beauty, commonly so called; it happened, that, from this cause, they had more than usual power in the person of that young lady.

She was now arrived at that period of life which takes, or is supposed to take, from the flippancy of girlhood those sprightlinesses with which some good-natured old maids oblige the world at threescore. She had been ushered into life (as that word is used in the dialect of St. James's) at seventeen, her father being then in parliament, and living in London: at seventeen, therefore, she had been an universal toast; her health, now she was four-and-twenty, was only drunk by those who knew her face at least. Her complexion was mellowed into a paleness, which certainly took from her beauty; but agreed, at least Harley used to say so, with the pensive softness of her mind. Her eyes were of that gentle hazel colour which is rather mild than piercing; and, except when they were lighted up by good-humour, which was frequently the case, were supposed by the fine gentleman to want fire. Her air and manner were elegant in the highest degree, and were as sure of commanding respect, as their mistress was far from demanding it. Her voice was

inexpressibly soft; it was, according to that incomparable simile of Otway's,

> " —— like the shepherd's pipe upon the mountains,
> When all his little flock 's at feed before him."

The effect it had upon Harley, himself used to paint ridiculously enough; and ascribed it to powers which few believed, and nobody cared for.

Her conversation was always cheerful, but rarely witty; and, without the smallest affectation of learning, had as much sentiment in it as would have puzzled a Turk, upon his principles of female materialism, to account for. Her beneficence was unbounded; indeed the natural tenderness of her heart might have been argued, by the frigidity of a casuist, as detracting from her virtue in this respect, for her humanity was a feeling, not a principle: but minds like Harley's are not very apt to make this distinction, and generally give our virtue credit for all that benevolence which is instinctive in our nature.

As her father had for some years retired to the country, Harley had frequent opportunities of seeing her. He looked on her for some time merely with that respect and admiration which her appearance seemed to demand, and the opinion of others conferred upon her: from this cause, perhaps, and from that extreme sensibility of which we have taken frequent notice, Harley was remarkably silent in her presence. He heard her sentiments with peculiar attention, sometimes with looks very expressive of approbation; but seldom declared his opinion on the subject, much less made compliments to the lady on the justness of her remarks.

From this very reason it was, that Miss Walton frequently took more particular notice of him than of other visitors, who, by the laws of precedency, were

better entitled to it; it was a mode of politeness she had peculiarly studied, to bring to the line of that equality, which is ever necessary for the ease of our guests, those whose sensibility had placed them below it.

Harley saw this; for though he was a child in the drama of the world, yet was it not altogether owing to a want of knowledge on his part; on the contrary, the most delicate consciousness of propriety often kindled that blush which marred the performance of it: this raised his esteem something above what the most sanguine descriptions of her goodness had been able to do; for certain it is, that notwithstanding the laboured definitions which very wise men have given us of the inherent beauty of virtue, we are always inclined to think her handsomest when she condescends to smile upon ourselves.

It would be trite to observe the easy gradation from esteem to love: in the bosom of Harley there scarce needed a transition; for there were certain seasons when his ideas were flushed to a degree much above their common complexion. In times not credulous of inspiration, we should account for this from some natural cause; but we do not mean to account for it at all; it were sufficient to describe its effects; but they were sometimes so ludicrous, as might derogate from the dignity of the sensations which produced them to describe. They were treated indeed as such by most of Harley's sober friends, who often laughed very heartily at the awkward blunders of the real Harley, when the different faculties, which should have prevented them, were entirely occupied by the ideal. In some of these paroxysms of fancy, Miss Walton did not fail to be introduced; and the picture which had been drawn amidst the surrounding objects of unnoticed levity, was now singled out to be viewed through

the medium of romantic imagination: it was improved of course, and esteem was a word inexpressive of the feelings which it excited.

CHAPTER XIV.

He sets out on his journey.—The beggar and his dog.

He had taken leave of his aunt on the eve of his intended departure; but the good lady's affection for her nephew interrupted her sleep, and early as it was next morning when Harley came down stairs to set out, he found her in the parlour with a tear on her cheek, and her caudle-cup in her hand. She knew enough of physic to prescribe against going abroad of a morning with an empty stomach. She gave her blessing with the draught; her instructions she had delivered the night before. They consisted mostly of negatives; for London, in her idea, was so replete with temptations, that it needed the whole armour of her friendly cautions to repel their attacks.

Peter stood at the door. We have mentioned this faithful fellow formerly: Harley's father had taken him up an orphan, and saved him from being cast on the parish; and he had ever since remained in the service of him and of his son. Harley shook him by the hand as he passed, smiling, as if he had said, I will not weep. He sprang hastily into the chaise that waited for him: Peter folded up the step. My dear Master, (said he, shaking the solitary lock that hung on either side of his head,) I have been told as how London is a sad place.——He was choked with the thought, and his benediction could not be heard:—but it shall be heard, honest Peter! where these tears will add to its energy.

In a few hours Harley reached the inn where he

proposed breakfasting; but the fullness of his heart would not suffer him to eat a morsel. He walked out on the road, and, gaining a little height, stood gazing on the quarter he had left. He looked for his wonted prospect, his fields, his woods, and his hills: they were lost in the distant clouds! He pencilled them on the clouds, and bade them farewell with a sigh!

He sat down on a large stone to take out a little pebble from his shoe, when he saw, at some distance, a beggar approaching him. He had on a loose sort of coat mended with different coloured rags, amongst which the blue and the russet were the predominant. He had a short knotty stick in his hand, and on the top of it was stuck a ram's horn; his knees (though he was no pilgrim) had worn the stuff of his breeches; he wore no shoes, and his stockings had entirely lost that part of them which should have covered his feet and ancles: in his face, however, was the plump appearance of good humour; he walked a good round pace, and a crook-legged dog trotted at his heels.

Our delicacies, said Harley to himself, are fantastic; they are not in nature! that beggar walks over the sharpest of these stones barefooted, while I have lost the most delightful dream in the world, from the smallest of them happening to get into my shoe.— The beggar had by this time come up, and, pulling off a piece of hat, asked charity of Harley; the dog began to beg too:—it was impossible to resist both; and, in truth, the want of shoes and stockings had made both unnecessary, for Harley had destined sixpence for him before. The beggar, on receiving it, poured forth blessings without number; and, with a sort of smile on his countenance, said to Harley, that if he wanted to have his fortune told—Harley turned his eye briskly on the beggar: it was an unpromising look for the subject of a prediction, and silenced the prophet immediately. I would much rather learn, said Harley,

what it is in your power to tell me: your trade must be an entertaining one: sit down on this stone, and let me know something of your profession; I have often thought of turning fortune-teller for a week or two myself.

Master, replied the beggar, I like your frankness much; God knows I had the humour of plain-dealing in me from a child; but there is no doing with it in this world; we must live as we can, and lying is, as you call it, my profession: but I was in some sort forced to the trade, for I dealt once in telling truth.

I was a labourer, sir, and gained as much as to make me live: I never laid by indeed: for I was reckoned a piece of a wag, and your wags, I take it, are seldom rich, Mr. Harley. So, said Harley, you seem to know me. Aye, there are few folks in the country that I don't know something of: How should I tell fortunes else? True; but to go on with your story: you were a labourer, you say, and a wag; your industry, I suppose, you left with your old trade; but your humour you preserve to be of use to you in your new.

What signifies sadness, sir? a man grows lean on't: but I was brought to my idleness by degrees; first I could not work, and it went against my stomach to work ever after. I was seized with a jail fever at the time of the assizes being in the county where I lived; for I was always curious to get acquainted with the felons, because they are commonly fellows of much mirth and little thought, qualities I had ever an esteem for. In the height of this fever, Mr. Harley, the house where I lay took fire, and burnt to the ground; I was carried out in that condition, and lay all the rest of my illness in a barn. I got the better of my disease, however, but I was so weak that I split blood whenever I attempted to work. I had no relation living that I knew of, and I never kept a friend above a week, when I was able to joke; I seldom remained above six

months in a parish, so that I might have died before I had found a settlement in any: thus I was forced to beg my bread, and a sorry trade I found it, Mr. Harley. I told all my misfortunes truly, but they were seldom believed; and the few who gave me a halfpenny as they passed, did it with a shake of the head, and an injunction not to trouble them with a long story. In short, I found that people don't care to give alms without some security for their money; a wooden leg or a withered arm is a sort of draught upon heaven for those who choose to have their money placed to account there; so I changed my plan, and, instead of telling my own misfortunes, began to prophesy happiness to others. This I found by much the better way: folks will always listen when the tale is their own; and of many who say they do not believe in fortune-telling, I have known few on whom it had not a very sensible effect. I pick up the names of their acquaintance; amours and little squabbles are easily gleaned among servants and neighbours; and indeed people themselves are the best intelligencers in the world for our purpose: they dare not puzzle us for their own sakes, for every one is anxious to hear what they wish to believe; and they who repeat it, to laugh at it when they have done, are generally more serious than their hearers are apt to imagine. With a tolerable good memory, and some share of cunning, with the help of walking a-nights over heaths and churchyards, with this, and showing the tricks of that there dog, whom I stole from the serjeant of a marching regiment, (and by the way he can steal too upon occasion,) I made shift to pick up a livelihood. My trade, indeed, is none of the honestest; yet people are not much cheated neither, who give a few halfpence for a prospect of happiness, which I have heard some persons say is all a man can arrive at in this world.—But I must bid you good day, sir; for I have three miles to walk before

noon, to inform some boarding-school young ladies, whether their husbands are to be peers of the realm, or captains in the army: a question which I promised to answer them by that time.

Harley had drawn a shilling from his pocket: but Virtue bade him consider on whom he was going to bestow it.—Virtue held back his arm:—but a milder form, a younger sister of Virtue's, not so severe as Virtue nor so serious as Pity, smiled upon him; his fingers lost their compression;—nor did Virtue offer to catch the money as it fell. It had no sooner reached the ground than the watchful cur (a trick he had been taught) snapped it up; and, contrary to the most approved method of stewardship, delivered it immediately into the hands of his master.

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CHAPTER XIX.

He makes a second expedition to the baronet's.—The laudable ambition of a young man to be thought something by the world.

We have related in a former chapter the little success of his first visit to the great man, for whom he had the introductory letter from Mr. Walton. To people of equal sensibility, the influence of those trifles we mentioned on his deportment will not appear surprising; but to his friends in the country they could not be stated, nor would they have allowed them any place in the account. In some of their letters, therefore, which he received soon after, they expressed their surprise at his not having been more urgent in his application, and again recommended the blushless assiduity of successful merit.

He resolved to make another attempt at the baronet's; fortified with higher notions of his own dignity, and with less apprehension of repulse. In his way to Grosvenor-square he began to ruminate on the folly of mankind, who affix those ideas of superiority to riches, which reduced the minds of men, by nature equal with the more fortunate, to that sort of servility which he felt in his own. By the time he had reached the square, and was walking along the pavement which led to the baronet's, he had brought his reasoning on the subject to such a point, that the conclusion, by every rule of logic, should have led him to a thorough indifference in his approaches to a fellow mortal, whether that fellow mortal was possessed of six, or six thousand pounds a year. It is probable, however, that the premises had been improperly formed; for it is certain that, when he approached the great man's door, he felt his heart agitated by an unusual pulsation.

He had almost reached it, when he observed a young gentleman coming out, dressed in a white frock and a red laced waistcoat, with a small switch in his hand, which he seemed to manage with a particular good grace. As he passed him on the steps, the stranger very politely made him a bow, which Harley returned, though he could not remember ever having seen him before. He asked Harley, in the same civil manner, If he was going to wait on his friend the baronet? For I was just calling, said he, and am sorry to find that he is gone for some days into the country. Harley thanked him for his information; and was turning from the door, when the other observed, that it would be proper to leave his name, and very obligingly knocked for that purpose. Here is a gentleman, Tom, who meant to have waited on your master. Your name, if you please, sir? Harley.—You ll remember, Tom, Harley.—The door was shut. Since we are here, said he, we shall not lose our walk, if we add a little to it by a

turn or two in Hyde-park. He accompanied this proposal with a second bow, and Harley accepted of it by another in return.

The conversation as they walked was brilliant on the side of his companion. The playhouse, the opera, with every occurrence in high life, he seemed perfectly master of; and talked of some reigning beauties of quality, in a manner the most feeling in the world. Harley admired the happiness of his vivacity; and, opposite as it was to the reserve of his own nature, began to be much pleased with its effects.

Though I am not of opinion with some wise men, that the existence of objects depends on idea; yet I am convinced that their appearance is not a little influenced by it. The optics of some minds are in so unlucky a perspective, as to throw a certain shade on every picture that is presented to them; while those of others, (of which number was Harley,) like the mirrors of the ladies, have a wonderful effect in bettering their complexions. Through such a medium, perhaps, he was looking on his present companion.

When they had finished their walk, and were returning by the corner of the Park, they observed a board hung out of a window, signifying "an excellent ORDINARY on Saturdays and Sundays." It happened to be Saturday, and the table was covered for the purpose. What if we should go in and dine here, if you happen not to be engaged, sir? said the young gentleman. It is not impossible but we shall meet with some original or other; it is a sort of humour I like hugely. Harley made no objection; and the stranger showed him the way into the parlour.

He was placed, by the courtesy of his introductor, in an arm-chair that stood at one side of the fire. Over against him was seated a man of a grave considering aspect, with that look of sober prudence which indicates what is commonly called a warm man. He wore

a pretty large wig, which had once been white, but was now of a brownish yellow; his coat was one of those modest-coloured drabs, which mock the injuries of dust and dirt; two jack-boots concealed, in part, the well-mended knees of an old pair of buckskin breeches, while the spotted handkerchief round his neck preserved at once its owner from catching cold and his neckcloth from being dirtied. Next him sat another man with a tankard in his hand, and a quid of tobacco in his cheek, whose eye was rather more vivacious, and whose dress was something smarter.

The first-mentioned gentleman took notice, that the room had been so lately washed, as not to have had time to dry; and remarked, that wet lodging was unwholesome for man or beast. He looked round at the same time for a poker to stir the fire with, which, he at last observed to the company, the people of the house had removed, in order to save their coals. This difficulty, however, he overcame, by the help of Harley's stick, saying, That as they should, no doubt, pay for the fire in some shape or other, he saw no reason why they should not have the use of it while they sat.

The door was now opened for the admission of dinner. I don't know how it is with you, gentlemen, said Harley's new acquaintance; but I am afraid I shall not be able to get down a morsel at this horrid mechanical hour of dining. He sat down, however, and did not show any want of appetite by his eating. He took upon him the carving of the meat, and criticized on the goodness of the pudding.

When the table-cloth was removed, he proposed calling for some punch; which was readily agreed to: he seemed at first inclined to make it himself, but afterwards changed his mind, and left that province to the waiter, telling him to have it pure West Indian, or he could not taste a drop of it.

When the punch was brought, he undertook to fill

the glasses and call the toasts.——"The King."—The toast naturally produced politics. It is the privilege of Englishmen to drink the king's health, and to talk of his conduct. The man who sat opposite to Harley (and who by this time, partly from himself, and partly from his acquaintance on his left hand, was discovered to be a grazier) observed, That it was a shame for so many pensioners to be allowed to take the bread out of the mouth of the poor. Aye, and provisions, said his friend, were never so dear in the memory of man; I wish the king and his counsellors would look to that. As for the matter of provisions, neighbour Wrightson, he replied, I am sure the prices of cattle— A dispute would have probably ensued, but it was prevented by the spruce toast-master, who gave a sentiment; and turning to the two politicians, Pray, gentlemen, said he, let us have done with these musty politics: I would always leave them to the beer-suckers in Butcher-Row*. Come, let us have something of the fine arts. That was a damn'd hard match between the Nailor and Tim Bucket. The knowing ones were cursedly taken in there! I lost a cool hundred myself, 'faith.

At mention of a cool hundred, the grazier threw his eyes aslant, with a mingled look of doubt and surprise; while the man at his elbow looked arch, and gave a short emphatical sort of cough.

Both seemed to be silenced, however, by this intelligence; and, while the remainder of the punch lasted, the conversation was wholly engrossed by the gentleman with the fine waistcoat, who told a great many immense comical stories and confounded smart things, as he termed them, acted and spoken by lords, ladies, and young bucks of quality, of his acquaintance. At

* It may be necessary to inform readers of the present day, that the noted political debating society called The Robin Hood was held at a house in Butcher-Row.

last, the grazier, pulling out a watch of a very unusual size, and telling the hour, said, that he had an appointment. Is it so late? said the young gentleman: then I am afraid I have missed an appointment already; but the truth is, I am cursedly given to missing of appointments.

When the grazier and he were gone, Harley turned to the remaining personage, and asked him, If he knew that young gentleman? A gentleman! said he; aye, he is one of your gentlemen at the top of an affidavit. I knew him, some years ago, in the quality of a footman; and, I believe, he had sometimes the honour to be a pimp. At last, some of the great folks, to whom he had been serviceable in both capacities, had him made a gauger; in which station he remains, and has the assurance to pretend an acquaintance with men of quality. The impudent dog! with a few shillings in his pocket, he will talk you three times as much as my friend Mundy there, who is worth nine thousand if he's worth a farthing. But I know the rascal, and despise him as he deserves.

Harley began to despise him too, and to conceive some indignation at having sat with patience to hear such a fellow speak nonsense. But he corrected himself, by reflecting, that he was perhaps as well entertained, and instructed too, by this same modest gauger as he should have been by such a man as he had thought proper to personate. And surely the fault may more properly be imputed to that rank where the futility is real, than where it is feigned; to that rank, whose opportunities for nobler accomplishments have only served to rear a fabric of folly, which the untutored hand of affectation, even among the meanest of mankind, can imitate with success.

CHAPTER XX.

He visits Bedlam.—The distresses of a daughter.

Of those things called sights in London, which every stranger is supposed desirous to see, Bedlam is one. To that place, therefore, an acquaintance of Harley's, after having accompanied him to several other shows, proposed a visit. Harley objected to it, Because, said he, I think it an inhuman practice to expose the greatest misery with which our nature is afflicted, to every idle visitant who can afford a trifling perquisite to the keeper; especially as it is a distress which the humane must see with a painful reflection, that it is not in their power to alleviate it. He was overpowered, however, by the solicitations of his friend and the other persons of the party (amongst whom were several ladies); and they went in a body to Moorfields.

Their conductor led them first to the dismal mansions of those who are in the most horrid state of incurable madness. The clanking of chains, the wildness of their cries, and the imprecations which some of them uttered, formed a scene inexpressibly shocking. Harley and his companions, especially the female part of them, begged their guide to return: he seemed surprised at their uneasiness, and was with difficulty prevailed on to leave that part of the house without showing them some others; who, as he expressed it in the phrase of those that keep wild beasts for show, were much better worth seeing than any they had passed, being ten times more fierce and unmanageable.

He led them next to that quarter where those reside, who, as they are not dangerous to themselves or others, enjoy a certain degree of freedom, according to the state of their distemper.

Harley had fallen behind his companions, looking at a man who was making pendulums with bits of thread and little balls of clay. He delineated the segment of a circle on the wall with chalk, and marked their different vibrations by intersecting it with cross lines. A decent-looking man came up, and, smiling at the maniac, turned to Harley, and told him, That gentleman had once been a very celebrated mathematician. He fell a sacrifice, said he, to the theory of comets; for having, with infinite labour, formed a table on the conjectures of Sir Isaac Newton, he was disappointed in the return of one of those luminaries, and was very soon after obliged to be placed here by his friends. If you please to follow me, sir, continued the stranger, I believe I shall be able to give you a more satisfactory account of the unfortunate people you see here, than the man who attends your companions. Harley bowed, and accepted his offer.

The next person they came up to had scrawled a variety of figures on a piece of slate. Harley had the curiosity to take a nearer view of them. They consisted of different columns, on the top of which were marked South sea annuities, India stock, and Three per cent. annuities consol. This, said Harley's instructor, was a gentleman well known in Change-alley. He was once worth fifty thousand pounds, and had actually agreed for the purchase of an estate in the West, in order to realize his money; but he quarrelled with the proprietor about the repairs of the garden-wall, and so returned to town to follow his old trade of stock-jobbing a little longer; when an unlucky fluctuation of stock, in which he was engaged to an immense extent, reduced him at once to poverty and to madness. Poor wretch! he told me t'other day, that against the next payment of differences he should be some hundreds above a plum.—

It is a spondee, and I will maintain it, interrupted a voice on his left hand. This assertion was followed by a very rapid recital of some verses from Homer. That figure, said the gentleman, whose clothes are so bedaubed with snuff, was a school-master of some reputation; he came hither to be resolved of some doubts he entertained concerning the genuine pronunciation of the Greek vowels. In his highest fits, he makes frequent mention of one Mr. Bentley.

But delusive ideas, sir, are the motives of the greatest part of mankind, and a heated imagination the power by which their actions are incited: the world, in the eye of a philosopher, may be said to be a large madhouse. It is true, answered Harley, the passions of men are temporary madnesses; and sometimes very fatal in their effects,

"From Macedonia's madman to the Swede."

It was, indeed, said the stranger, a very mad thing in Charles, to think of adding so vast a country as Russia to his dominions; that would have been fatal indeed; the balance of the North would then have been lost; but the Sultan and I would never have allowed it.——Sir! said Harley, with no small surprise on his countenance. Why yes, answered the other, the Sultan and I; do you know me? I am the Chan of Tartary.

Harley was a good deal struck by this discovery: he had prudence enough, however, to conceal his amazement, and, bowing as low to the monarch as his dignity required, left him immediately, and joined his companions.

He found them in a quarter of the house set apart for the insane of the other sex, several of whom had gathered about the female visitors, and were examining, with rather more accuracy than might have been expected, the particulars of their dress.

Separate from the rest stood one, whose appearance had something of superior dignity. Her face, though pale and wasted, was less squalid than those of the others, and showed a dejection of that decent kind, which moves our pity unmixed with horror; upon her, therefore, the eyes of all were immediately turned. The keeper, who accompanied them, observed it: This, said he, is a young lady, who was born to ride in her coach-and-six. She was beloved, if the story I have heard is true, by a young gentleman, her equal in birth, though by no means her match in fortune: but love, they say, is blind, and so she fancied him as much as he did her. Her father, it seems, would not hear of their marriage, and threatened to turn her out of doors, if ever she saw him again. Upon this the young gentleman took a voyage to the West Indies, in hopes of bettering his fortune, and obtaining his mistress; but he was scarce landed, when he was seized with one of the fevers which are common in those islands, and died in a few days, lamented by every one that knew him. This news soon reached his mistress, who was at the same time pressed by her father to marry a rich miserly fellow, who was old enough to be her grandfather. The death of her lover had no effect on her inhuman parent; he was only the more earnest for her marriage with the man he had provided for her; and what between her despair at the death of the one, and her aversion to the other, the poor young lady was reduced to the condition you see her in. But God would not prosper such cruelty; her father's affairs soon after went to wreck, and he died almost a beggar.

Though this story was told in very plain language, it had particularly attracted Harley's notice; he had given it the tribute of some tears. The unfortunate young lady had till now seemed entranced in thought, with her eyes fixed on a little garnet ring she wore on

her finger; she turned them now upon Harley. My Billy is no more! said she, Do you weep for my Billy? Blessings on your tears! I would weep too, but my brain is dry; and it burns, it burns, it burns!—She drew nearer to Harley.—Be comforted, young lady, said he, your Billy is in heaven.—Is he, indeed? and shall we meet again? and shall that frightful man (pointing to the keeper) not be there?—Alas! I am grown naughty of late; I have almost forgotten to think of heaven: yet I pray sometimes; when I can, I pray; and sometimes I sing; when I am saddest, I sing:—You shall hear me—hush!

> "Light be the earth on Billy's breast,
> And green the sod that wraps his grave."

There was a plaintive wildness in the air not to be withstood; and, except the keeper's, there was not an unmoistened eye around her.

Do you weep again? said she; I would not have you weep: you are like my Billy: you are, believe me; jnst so he looked when he gave me this ring; poor Billy! 'twas the last time ever we met!—

> "'Twas when the seas were roaring—"

I love you for resembling my Billy; but I shall never love any man like him.—She stretched out her hand to Harley; he pressed it between both of his, and bathed it with his tears.—Nay, that is Billy's ring, said she, you cannot have it, indeed; but here is another, look here, which I platted to-day of some gold-thread from this bit of stuff; will you keep it for my sake? I am a strange girl;—but my heart is harmless: my poor heart; it will burst some day; feel how it beats! —She pressed his hand to her bosom, then holding her head in the attitude of listening—Hark! one, two, three! be quiet, thou little trembler; my Billy is cold! —but I had forgotten the ring.—She put it on his fin-

ger.—Farewell! I must leave you now.—She would have withdrawn her hand; Harley held it to his lips.—I dare not stay longer; my head throbs sadly: farewell!—She walked with a hurried step to a little apartment at some distance. Harley stood fixed in astonishment and pity; his friend gave money to the keeper.—Harley looked on his ring.—He put a couple of guineas into the man's hand. Be kind to that unfortunate—He burst into tears, and left them.

CHAPTER XXI.

The Misanthropist.

THE friend who had conducted him to Moorfields called upon him again the next evening. After some talk on the adventures of the preceding day; I carried you yesterday, said he to Harley, to visit the mad; let me introduce you to-night, at supper, to one of the wise; but you must not look for any thing of the Socratic pleasantry about him; on the contrary, I warn you to expect the spirit of a Diogenes. That you may be a little prepared for his extraordinary manner, I will let you into some particulars of his history.

He is the elder of the two sons of a gentleman of considerable estate in the country. Their father died when they were young: both were remarkable at school for quickness of parts, and extent of genius; this had been bred to no profession, because his father's fortune, which descended to him, was thought sufficient to set him above it; the other was put apprentice to an eminent attorney. In this the expectations of his friends were more consulted than his own inclination; for both his brother and he had feelings of that warm kind, that could ill brook a study so dry as the law, especially in that department of it which was allotted to him;

But the difference of their tempers made the characteristical distinction between them. The younger, from the gentleness of his nature, bore with patience a situation entirely discordant to his genius and disposition. At times, indeed, his pride would suggest, of how little importance those talents were, which the partiality of his friends had often extolled; they were now incumbrances in a walk of life where the dull and the ignorant passed him at every turn; his fancy and his feeling were invincible obstacles to eminence in a situation, where his fancy had no room for exertion, and his feeling experienced perpetual disgust. But these murmurings he never suffered to be heard; and that he might not offend the prudence of those who had been concerned in the choice of his profession, he continued to labour in it several years, till, by the death of a relation, he succeeded to an estate of a little better than 100*l.* a year; with which, and the small patrimony left him, he retired into the country, and made a love-match with a young lady of a similar temper to his own, with whom the sagacious world pitied him for finding happiness.

But his elder brother, whom you are to see at supper, if you will do us the favour of your company, was naturally impetuous, decisive, and overbearing. He entered into life with those ardent expectations by which young men are commonly deluded; in his friendships, warm to excess, and equally violent in his dislikes. He was on the brink of marriage with a young lady, when one of those friends, for whose honour he would have pawned his life, made an elopement with that very goddess, and left him besides deeply engaged for sums which that good friend's extravagance had squandered.

The dreams he had formerly enjoyed were now changed for ideas of a very different nature. He abjured all confidence in any thing of human form; sold

his lands, which still produced him a very large reversion, came to town, and immured himself with a woman who had been his nurse, in little better than a garret; and has ever since applied his talents to the vilifying of his species. In one thing I must take the liberty to instruct you: however different your sentiments may be (and different they must be), you will suffer him to go on without contradiction; otherwise he will be silent immediately, and we shall not get a word from him all the night after. Harley promised to remember this injunction, and accepted the invitation of his friend.

When they arrived at the house, they were informed that the gentleman was come, and had been shown into the parlour. They found him sitting with a daughter of his friend's, about three years old, on his knee, whom he was teaching the alphabet from a hornbook: at a little distance stood a sister of hers some years older. Get you away, Miss, said he to this last; you are a pert gossip, and I will have nothing to do with you. Nay, answered she, Nancy is your favourite; you are quite in love with Nancy. Take away that girl, said he to her father, whom he now observed to have entered the room, she has woman about her already. The children were accordingly dismissed.

Betwixt that and supper-time he did not utter a syllable. When supper came, he quarrelled with every dish at table, but ate of them all; only exempting from his censures a salad, which you have not spoiled, said he, because you have not attempted to cook it.

When the wine was set upon the table, he took from his pocket a particular smoking apparatus, and filled his pipe, without taking any more notice of Harley, or his friend, than if no such persons had been in the room.

Harley could not help stealing a look of surprise at him; but his friend, who knew his humour, returned

it, by annihilating his presence in the like manner, and, leaving him to his own meditations, addressed himself entirely to Harley.

In their discourse some mention happened to be made of an amiable character, and the words *honour* and *politeness* were applied to it. Upon this the gentleman, laying down his pipe, and changing the tone of his countenance from an ironical grin to something more intently contemptuous: Honour, said he, Honour and politeness! this is the coin of the world, and passes current with the fools of it. You have substituted the shadow Honour, instead of the substance Virtue; and have banished the reality of friendship for the fictitious semblance, which you have termed Politeness: politeness, which consists in a certain ceremonious jargon, more ridiculous to the ear of reason than the voice of a puppet. You have invented sounds, which you worship, though they tyrannize over your peace; and are surrounded with empty forms, which take from the honest emotions of joy, and add to the poignancy of misfortune.—Sir, said Harley—— His friend winked to him, to remind him of the caution he had received. He was silenced by the thought.——The philosopher turned his eye upon him: he examined him from top to toe, with a sort of triumphant contempt. Harley's coat happened to be a new one; the other's was as shabby as could possibly be supposed to be on the back of a gentleman; there was much significance in his look with regard to his coat; it spoke of the sleekness of folly, and the threadbareness of wisdom.

Truth, continued he, the most amiable as well as the most natural of virtues, you are at pains to eradicate. Your very nurseries are seminaries of falsehood; and what is called Fashion in manhood, completes the system of avowed insincerity. Mankind in the

gross is a gaping monster, that loves to be deceived; and has seldom been disappointed; nor is their vanity less fallacious to your philosophers, who adopt modes of truth to follow them through the paths of error, and defend paradoxes merely to be singular in defending them. These are they whom ye term Ingenious; 'tis a phrase of commendation I detest; it implies an attempt to impose on my judgement, by flattering my imagination; yet these are they whose works are read by the old with delight, which the young are taught to look upon as the codes of knowledge and philosophy.

Indeed, the education of your youth is every way preposterous; you waste at school years in improving talents, without having ever spent an hour in discovering them; one promiscuous line of instruction is followed, without regard to genius, capacity, or probable situation in the commonwealth. From this beargarden of the pedagogue, a raw unprincipled boy is turned loose upon the world to travel, without any ideas but those of improving his dress at Paris, or starting into taste by gazing on some paintings at Rome. Ask him of the manners of the people, and he will tell you that the skirt is worn much shorter in France, and that every body eats macaroni in Italy. When he returns home, he buys a seat in parliament, and studies the constitution at Arthur's.

Nor are your females trained to any more useful purpose: they are taught, by the very rewards which their nurses propose for good behaviour, by the first thing like a jest which they hear from every male visitor of the family, that a young woman is a creature to be married; and when they are grown somewhat older, are instructed, that it is the purpose of marriage to have the enjoyment of pin-money, and the expectation of a jointure,

*These indeed are the effects of luxury, which is perhaps inseparable from a certain degree of power and grandeur in a nation. But it is not simply of the progress of luxury that we have to complain: did its votaries keep in their own sphere of thoughtless dissipation, we might despise them without emotion; but the frivolous pursuits of pleasure are mingled with the most important concerns of the state; and public enterprise shall sleep till he who should guide its operation has decided his bets at Newmarket, or fulfilled his engagement with a favourite mistress in the country. We want some man of acknowledged eminence to point our counsels with that firmness which the counsels of a great people require. We have hundreds of ministers, who press forward into office, without having ever learned that art which is necessary for every business, the art of thinking; and mistake the petulance, which could give inspiration to smart sarcasms on an obnoxious measure in a popular assembly, for the ability which is to balance the interest of kingdoms, and investigate the latent sources of national superiority. With the administration of such men the people can never be satisfied; for, besides that their confidence is gained only by the view of superior talents, there needs that depth of knowledge, which is not only acquainted with the just extent of power, but can also trace its connexion with the expedient,

* Though the Curate could not remember having shown this chapter to any body, I strongly suspect that these political observations are the work of a later pen than the rest of his performance. There seems to have been, by some accident, a gap in the manuscript, from the words "expectation of a jointure," to these, "In short, man is an animal," where the present blank ends; and some other person (for the hand is different, and the ink whiter) has filled part of it with sentiments of his own. Whoever he was, he seems to have caught some portion of the spirit of the man he personates.

to preserve its possessors from the contempt which attends irresolution, or the resentment which follows temerity.

* * * * * * * *

[Here a considerable part is wanting.]

* * In short, man is an animal equally selfish and vain. Vanity, indeed, is but a modification of selfishness. From the latter, there are some who pretend to be free: they are generally such as declaim against the lust of wealth and power, because they have never been able to obtain any high degree in either; they boast of generosity and feeling. They tell us (perhaps they tell us in rhyme) that the sensations of an honest heart, of a mind universally benevolent, make up the quiet bliss which they enjoy; but they will not, by this, be exempted from the charge of selfishness. Whence the luxurious happiness they describe in their little family circles? Whence the pleasure which they feel when they trim their evening fires, and listen to the howl of winter's wind? Whence, but from the secret reflection of what houseless wretches feel from it? Or do you administer comfort in affliction—the motive is at hand; I have had it preached to me in nineteen out of twenty of your consolatory discourses—the comparative littleness of our own misfortunes.

With vanity your best virtues are grossly tainted; your benevolence, which ye deduce immediately from the natural impulse of the heart, squints to it for its reward. There are some, indeed, who tell us of the satisfaction which flows from a secret consciousness of good actions; this secret satisfaction is truly excellent—when we have some friend to whom we may discover its excellence.

He now paused a moment to relight his pipe, when a clock, that stood at his back, struck eleven:

he started up at the sound, took his hat and his cane, and nodding good night with his head, walked out of the room. The gentleman of the house called a servant to bring the stranger's surtout. What sort of a night is it, fellow? said he. It rains, sir, answered the servant, with an easterly wind.—Easterly for ever! —He made no other reply; but, shrugging up his shoulders till they almost touched his ears, wrapped himself tight in his great coat, and disappeared.

This is a strange creature, said his friend to Harley. I cannot say, answered he, that his remarks are of the pleasant kind: it is curious to observe how the nature of truth may be changed by the garb it wears; softened to the admonition of friendship, or soured into the severity of reproof; yet this severity may be useful to some tempers; it somewhat resembles a file; disagreeable in its operation, but hard metals may be the brighter for it.

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CHAPTER XXV.

His skill in physiognomy.

THE company at the baronet's removed to the playhouse accordingly, and Harley took his usual route into the Park. He observed, as he entered, a fresh-looking elderly gentleman in conversation with a beggar, who, leaning on his crutch, was recounting the hardships he had undergone, and explaining the wretchedness of his present condition. This was a very interesting dialogue to Harley; he was rude enough therefore to slacken his pace as he approached, and at last to make a full stop at the gentleman's back, who was just then expressing his compassion for the

beggar, and regretting that he had not a farthing of change about him. At saying this he looked piteously on the fellow; there was something in his physiognomy which caught Harley's notice; indeed physiognomy was one of Harley's foibles, for which he bad been often rebuked by his aunt in the country; who used to tell him, that when he was come to her years and experience, he would know that all's not gold that glisters; and it must be owned, that his aunt was a very sensible, harsh-looking, maiden-lady of threescore and upwards. But he was too apt to forget this caution; and now, it seems, it had not occurred to him: stepping up, therefore, to the gentleman, who was lamenting the want of silver, Your intentions, sir, said he, are so good, that I cannot help lending you my assistance to carry them into execution,—and gave the beggar a shilling. The other returned a suitable compliment, and extolled the benevolence of Harley. They kept walking together, and benevolence grew the topic of discourse.

The stranger was fluent on the subject. There is no use of money, said he, equal to that of beneficence: with the profuse, it is lost, and even with those who lay it out according to the prudence of the world, the objects acquired by it pall on the sense, and have scarce become our own till they lose their value with the power of pleasing: but here the enjoyment grows on reflection, and our money is most truly ours when it ceases to be in our possession.

Yet I agree in some measure, answered Harley, with those who think, that charity to our common beggars is often misplaced; there are objects less obtrusive whose title is a better one.

We cannot easily distinguish, said the stranger; and even of the worthless, are there not many whose imprudence, or whose vice, may have been one dreadful consequence of misfortune?

Harley looked again in his face, and blessed himself for his skill in physiognomy.

By this time they had reached the end of the walk, the old gentleman leaning on the rails to take breath, and in the mean time they were joined by a younger man, whose figure was much above the appearance of his dress, which was poor and shabby: Harley's former companion addressed him as an acquaintance, and they turned on the walk together.

The elder of the strangers complained of the closeness of the evening, and asked the other, If he would go with him into a house hard-by, and take one draught of excellent cyder. The man who keeps this house, said he to Harley, was once a servant of mine: I could not think of turning loose upon the world a faithful old fellow, for no other reason but that his age had incapacitated him; so I gave him an annuity of ten pounds, with the help of which he has set up this little place here, and his daughter goes and sells milk in the City, while her father manages his tap-room, as he calls it, at home. I can't well ask a gentleman of your appearance to accompany me to so paltry a place. —Sir, replied Harley, interrupting him, I would much rather enter it than the most celebrated tavern in town: to give to the necessitous, may sometimes be a weakness in the man; to encourage industry, is a duty in the citizen. They entered the house accordingly.

On a table at the corner of the room lay a pack of cards, loosely thrown together. The old gentleman reproved the man of the house for encouraging so idle an amusement. Harley attempted to defend him, from the necessity of accommodating himself to the humour of his guests, and, taking up the cards, began to shuffle them backwards and forwards in his hand. Nay, I don't think cards so unpardonable an amusement as some do, replied the other; and now and then, about this time of the evening, when my eyes begin to

fail me for my book, I divert myself with a game at piquet, without finding my morals a bit relaxed by it. Do you play piquet, sir? (to Harley.) Harley answered in the affirmative; upon which the other proposed playing a pool at a shilling a game, doubling the stakes; adding, that he never played higher with any body.

Harley's goodnature could not refuse the benevolent old man; and the younger stranger, though he at first pleaded prior engagements, yet, being earnestly solicited by his friend, at last yielded to solicitation.

When they began to play, the old gentleman, somewhat to the surprise of Harley, produced ten shillings to serve for markers of his score. He had no change for the beggar, said Harley to himself; but I can easily account for it; it is curious to observe the affection that inanimate things will create in us by a long acquaintance: if I may judge from my own feelings, the old man would not part with one of these counters for ten times its intrinsic value; it even got the better of his benevolence! I myself have a pair of old brass sleeve-buttons— Here he was interrupted by being told that the old gentleman had beat the younger, and that it was his turn to take up the conqueror. Your game has been short, said Harley. I repiqued him, answered the old man, with joy sparkling in his countenance. Harley wished to be repiqued too, but he was disappointed; for he had the same good fortune against his opponent. Indeed, never did fortune, mutable as she is, delight in mutability so much as at that moment: the victory was so quick, and so constantly alternate, that the stake in a short time amounted to no less a sum than 12*l.*, Harley's proportion of which was within half a guinea of the money he had in his pocket. He had before proposed a division, but the old gentleman opposed it with such a pleasant warmth in his manner, that it was always overruled.

Now, however, he told them that he had an appointment with some gentlemen, and it was within a few minutes of his hour. The younger stranger had gained one game, and was engaged in the second with the other; they agreed, therefore, that the stake should be divided, if the old gentleman won that; which was more than probable, as his score was 90 to 35, and he was elder hand: but a momentous repique decided it in favour of his adversary, who seemed to enjoy his victory mingled with regret, for having won too much; while his friend, with great ebullience of passion, many praises of his own good play, and many maledictions on the power of chance, took up the cards and threw them into the fire.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Man of Feeling in a brothel.

The company he was engaged to meet were assembled in Fleet-street. He had walked some time along the Strand, amidst a crowd of those wretches who wait the uncertain wages of prostitution, with ideas of pity suitable to the scene around him, and the feelings he possessed, and had got as far as Somerset-house, when one of them laid hold of his arm, and, with a voice tremulous and faint, asked him for a pint of wine in a manner more supplicatory than is usual with those whom the infamy of their profession has deprived of shame: he turned round at the demand, and looked steadfastly on the person who made it.

She was above the common size, and elegantly formed; her face was thin and hollow, and showed the remains of tarnished beauty. Her eyes were black, but had little of their lustre left: her cheeks had some paint laid on without art, and productive of no advan-

tage to her complexion, which exhibited a deadly paleness on the other parts of her face.

Harley stood in the attitude of hesitation; which she interpreting to her advantage, repeated her request, and endeavoured to force a leer of invitation into her countenance. He took her arm, and they walked on to one of those obsequious taverns in the neighbourhood, where the dearness of the wine is a discharge in full for the character of the house. From what impulse he did this, we do not mean to inquire; as it has ever been against our nature to search for motives where bad ones are to be found.——They entered, and a waiter showed them a room, and placed a bottle of claret on the table.

Harley filled the lady's glass; which she had no sooner tasted, than dropping it on the floor, and eagerly catching his arm, her eye grew fixt, her lip assumed a clayey whiteness, and she fell back lifeless in her chair.

Harley started from his seat, and, catching her in his arms, supported her from falling to the gound, looking wildly at the door, as if he wanted to run for assistance, but durst not leave the miserable creature. It was not till some minutes after, that it occurred to him to ring the bell, which at last however he thought of, and rang with repeated violence even after the waiter appeared. Luckily the waiter had his senses somewhat more about him; and snatching up a bottle of water, which stood on a beaufet at the end of the room, he sprinkled it over the hands and face of the dying figure before him. She began to revive, and, with the assistance of some hartshorn drops, which Harley now for the first time drew from his pocket, was able to desire the waiter to bring her a crust of bread; of which she swallowed some mouthfuls with the appearance of the keenest hunger. The waiter withdrew: when turning to Harley, sobbing at the

same time, and shedding tears, I am sorry, sir, said she, that I should have given you so much trouble; but you will pity me when I tell you, that till now I have not tasted a morsel these two days past.—He fixed his eyes on hers—every circumstance but the last was forgotten; and he took her hand with as much respect as if she had been a duchess. It was ever the privilege of misfortune to be revered by him.—Two days!—said he; and I have fared sumptuously every day!—He was reaching to the bell; she understood his meaning, and prevented him. I beg, sir, said she, that you would give yourself no more trouble about a wretch who does not wish to live; but, at present, I could not eat a bit; my stomach even rose at the last mouthful of that crust.—He offered to call a chair, saying that he hoped a little rest would relieve her. —He had one half-guinea left: I am sorry, he said, that at present I should be able to make you an offer of no more than this paltry sum.——She burst into tears. Your generosity, sir, is abused; to bestow it on me is to take it from the virtuous: I have no title but misery to plead; misery of my own procuring. No more of that, answered Harley; there is virtue in these tears; let the fruit of them be virtue.—He rang, and ordered a chair.—Though I am the vilest of beings, said she, I have not forgotten every virtue; gratitude, I hope, I shall still have left, did I but know who is my benefactor.—My name is Harley—Could I ever have an opportunity—You shall, and a glorious one too! your future conduct—but I do not mean to reproach you—if I say it will be the noblest reward—I will do myself the pleasure of seeing you again.—Here the waiter entered, and told them the chair was at the door. The lady informed Harley of her lodgings, and he promised to wait on her at ten next morning.

He led her to the chair, and returned to clear with

the waiter, without ever once reflecting that he had no money in his pocket. He was ashamed to make an excuse; yet an excuse must be made: he was beginning to frame one, when the waiter cut him short, by telling him that he could not run scores; but that, if he would leave his watch, or any other pledge, it would be as safe as if it lay in his pocket. Harley jumped at the proposal, and, pulling out his watch, delivered it into his hands immediately; and having, for once, had the precaution to take a note of the lodging he intended to visit next morning, sallied forth with a blush of triumph on his face, without taking notice of the sneer of the waiter, who, twirling the watch in his hand, made him a profound bow at the door, and whispered to a girl, who stood in the passage, something, in which the word CULLY was honoured with a particular emphasis.

CHAPTER XXVII.

His skill in physiognomy is doubted.

AFTER he had been some time with the company he had appointed to meet, and the last bottle was called for, he first recollected, that he would be again at a loss how to discharge his share of the reckoning. He applied therefore to one of them, with whom he was most intimate, acknowledging that he had not a farthing of money about him; and, upon being jocularly asked the reason, acquainted them with the two adventures we have just now related. One of the company asked him, If the old man in Hyde-park did not wear a brownish coat, with a narrow gold edging, and his companion an old green frock, with a buff-coloured waistcoat. Upon Harley's recollecting that they did, Then, said he, you may be thankful you have come

off so well; they are two as noted sharpers, in their way, as any in town, and but t'other night took me in for a much larger sum: I had some thoughts of applying to a justice, but one does not like to be seen in those matters.

Harley answered, That he could not but fancy the gentleman was mistaken, as he never saw a face promise more honestly than that of the old man he had met with.—His face! said a grave-looking man, who sat opposite to him, squirting the juice of his tobacco obliquely into the grate. There was something very emphatical in the action: for it was followed by a burst of laughter round the table. Gentlemen, said Harley, you are disposed to be merry; it may be as you imagine, for I confess myself ignorant of the town; but there is one thing which makes me bear the loss of my money with temper; the young fellow who won it must have been miserably poor: I observed him borrow money for the stake from his friend: he had distress and hunger in his countenance: be his character what it may, his necessities at least plead for him.—At this there was a louder laugh than before. Gentlemen, said the lawyer, one of whose conversations with Harley we have already recorded, here's a very pretty fellow for you; to have heard him talk some nights ago, as I did, you might have sworn he was a saint; yet now he games with sharpers, and loses his money; and is bubbled by a fine story invented by a whore, and pawns his watch:—here are sanctified doings with a witness!

Young gentleman, said his friend on the other side of the table, let me advise you to be a little more cautious for the future; and as for faces—you may look into them to know whether a man's nose be a long or a short one.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

He keeps his appointment.

The last night's raillery of his companions was recalled to his remembrance when he awoke, and the colder homilies of prudence began to suggest some things, which were nowise favourable for a performance of his promise to the unfortunate female he had met with before. He rose uncertain of his purpose; but the torpor of such considerations was seldom prevalent over the warmth of his nature. He walked some turns backwards and forwards in his room; he recalled the languid form of the fainting wretch to his mind: he wept at the recollection of her tears. 'Though I am the vilest of beings, I have not forgotten every virtue; gratitude, I hope, I shall still have left.'—He took a larger stride—Powers of mercy that surround me! cried he, do ye not smile upon deeds like these? to calculate the chances of deception is too tedious a business for the life of man!—The clock struck ten! ——When he was got down stairs, he found that he had forgot the note of her lodgings; he gnawed his lips at the delay: he was fairly on the pavement, when he recollected having left his purse! he did but just prevent himself from articulating an imprecation. He rushed a second time up into his chamber. What a wretch I am! said he: ere this time, perhaps—'T was a perhaps not to be borne;—two vibrations of a pendulum would have served him to lock his bureau;—but they could not be spared.

When he reached the house, and inquired for Miss Atkins (for that was the lady's name), he was shown up three pair of stairs into a small room lighted by one narrow lattice, and patched round with shreds of different-coloured paper. In the darkest corner stood

something like a bed, before which a tattered coverlet hung by way of curtain. He had not waited long when she appeared. Her face had the glister of new washed tears on it. I am ashamed, sir, said she, that you should have taken this fresh piece of trouble about one so little worthy of it : but, to the humane, I know there is a pleasure in goodness for its own sake ; if you have patience for the recital of my story, it may palliate, though it cannot excuse my faults. Harley bowed, as a sign of assent ; and she began as follows :

I am the daughter of an officer, whom a service of forty years had advanced no higher than the rank of captain. I have had hints from himself, and been informed by others, that it was in some measure owing to those principles of rigid honour, which it was his boast to possess, and which he early inculcated on me, that he had been able to arrive at no better station. My mother died when I was a child ; old enough to grieve for her death, but incapable of remembering her precepts. Though my father was dotingly fond of her, yet there were some sentiments in which they materially differed ; she had been bred from her infancy in the strictest principles of religion, and took the morality of her conduct from the motives which an adherence to those principles suggested. My father, who had been in the army from his youth, affixed an idea of pusillanimity to that virtue, which was formed by the doctrines, excited by the rewards, or guarded by the terrors of revelation ; his darling idol was the honour of a soldier ; a term which he held in such reverence, that he used it for his most sacred asseveration. When my mother died, I was some time suffered to continue in those sentiments which her instructions had produced ; but soon after, though, from respect to her memory, my father did not absolutely ridicule them, yet he showed, in his discourse to others, so little regard to them, and at times suggested to me mo-

tives of action so different, that I was soon weaned from opinions, which I began to consider as the dreams of superstition, or the artful inventions of designing hypocrisy. My mother's books were left behind at the different quarters we removed to, and my reading was principally confined to plays, novels, and those poetical descriptions of the beauty of virtue and honour, which the circulating libraries easily afforded.

As I was generally reckoned handsome, and the quickness of my parts extolled by all our visitors, my father had a pride in showing me to the world. I was young, giddy, open to adulation, and vain of those talents which acquired it.

After the last war, my father was reduced to half-pay; with which we retired to a village in the country, which the acquaintance of some genteel families who resided in it, and the cheapness of living, particularly recommended. My father rented a small house, a piece of ground sufficient to keep a horse for him, and a cow for the benefit of his family. An old man-servant managed his ground; while a maid, who had formerly been my mother's, and had since been mine, undertook the care of our little dairy: they were assisted in each of their provinces by my father and me; and we passed our time in a state of tranquillity, which he had always talked of with delight, and my train of reading had taught me to admire.

Though I had never seen the polite circles of the metropolis, the company my father had introduced me into had given me a degree of good-breeding which soon discovered a superiority over the young ladies of our village. I was quoted as an example of politeness, and my company courted by most of the considerable families in the neighbourhood.

Amongst the houses to which I was frequently invited, was Sir George Winbrooke's. He had two daughters nearly of my age, with whom, though they

had been bred up in those maxims of vulgar doctrine which my superior understanding could not but despise, yet as their good-nature led them to an imitation of my manners in every thing else, I cultivated a particular friendship.

Some months after our first acquaintance, Sir George's eldest son came home from his travels. His figure, his address, and conversation, were not unlike those warm ideas of an accomplished man which my favourite novels had taught me to form; and his sentiments on the article of religion were as liberal as my own: when any of these happened to be the topic of our discourse, I, who before had been silent, from a fear of being single in opposition, now kindled at the fire he raised, and defended our mutual opinions with all the eloquence I was mistress of. He would be respectfully attentive all the while, and when I had ended, would raise his eyes from the ground, look at me with a gaze of admiration, and express his applause in the highest strain of encomium. This was an incense the more pleasing, as I seldom or never had met with it before: for the young gentlemen who visited Sir George were for the most part of that common race of country 'squires, the pleasure of whose lives is derived from fox-hunting: these are seldom solicitous to please the women at all; or, if they were, would never think of applying their flattery to the mind.

Mr. Winbrooke observed the weakness of my soul, and took every occasion of improving the esteem he had gained. He asked my opinion of every author, of every sentiment, with that submissive diffidence which showed an unlimited confidence in my understanding. I saw myself revered, as a superior being, by one whose judgement my vanity told me was not likely to err: preferred by him to all the other visitors of my sex, whose fortunes and rank should have entitled them to a much higher degree of notice; I saw

their little jealousies at the distinguished attention he paid me; it was gratitude, it was pride, it was love! love which had made too fatal a progress in my heart, before any declaration on his part should have warranted a return: but I interpreted every look of attention, every expression of compliment, to the passion I imagined him inspired with, and imputed to his sensibility that silence which was the effect of art and design. At length, however, he took an opportunity of declaring his love: he now expressed himself in such ardent terms, that prudence might have suspected their sincerity: but prudence is rarely found in the situation I had been unguardedly led into; besides that the course of reading to which I had been accustomed did not lead me to conclude, that his expressions could be too warm to be sincere: nor was I even alarmed at the manner in which he talked of marriage, a subjection, he often hinted, to which genuine love should scorn to be confined. The woman, he would often say, who had merit like mine to fix his affection, could easily command it for ever. That honour too which I revered, was often called in to enforce his sentiments. I did not, however, absolutely assent to them: but I found my regard for their opposites diminish by degrees. If it is dangerous to be convinced, it is dangerous to listen; for our reason is so much of a machine, that it will not always be able to resist when the ear is perpetually assailed.

In short, Mr. Harley, (for I tire you with a relation, the catastrophe of which you will have already imagined,) I fell a prey to his artifices. He had not been able so thoroughly to convert me, that my conscience was silent on the subject; but he was so assiduous to give repeated proofs of unabated affection, that I hushed its suggestions as they rose. The world, however, I knew, was not to be silenced; and therefore I took occasion to express my uneasiness to my

seducer, and entreat him, as he valued the peace of one to whom he professed such attachment, to remove it by a marriage. He made excuses from his dependence on the will of his father, but quieted my fears by the promise of endeavouring to win his assent.

My father had been some days absent on a visit to a dying relation, from whom he had considerable expectations. I was left at home, with no other company than my books: my books I found were not now such companions as they used to be; I was restless, melancholy, unsatisfied with myself. But judge my situation when I received a billet from Mr. Winbrooke informing me, that he had sounded Sir George on the subject we had talked of, and found him so averse to any match so unequal to his own rank and fortune, that he was obliged, with whatever reluctance, to bid adieu to a place, the remembrance of which should ever be dear to him.

I read this letter a hundred times over. Alone, helpless, conscious of guilt, and abandoned by every better thought, my mind was one motley scene of terror, confusion, and remorse. A thousand expedients suggested themselves, and a thousand fears told me they would be vain: at last, in an agony of despair, I packed up a few clothes, took what money and trinkets were in the house, and set out for London, whither I understood he was gone; pretending to my maid, that I had received letters from my father requiring my immediate attendance. I had no other companion than a boy, a servant to the man from whom I hired my horses. I arrived in London within an hour of Mr. Winbrooke, and accidentally alighted at the very inn where he was.

He started and turned pale when he saw me; but recovered himself time enough to make many new protestations of regard, and begged me to make myself easy under a disappointment which was equally afflict-

ing to him. He procured me lodgings, where I slept, or rather endeavoured to sleep, for that night. Next morning I saw him again: he then mildly observed on the imprudence of my precipitate flight from the country, and proposed my removing to lodgings at another end of the town, to elude the search of my father, till he should fall upon some method of excusing my conduct to him, and reconciling him to my return. We took a hackney-coach, and drove to the house he mentioned.

It was situated in a dirty lane, furnished with a tawdry affectation of finery, with some old family-pictures hanging on walls which their own cobwebs would better have suited. I was struck with a secret dread at entering; nor was it lessened by the appearance of the landlady, who had that look of selfish shrewdness, which, of all others, is the most hateful to those whose feelings are untinctured with the world. A girl, who she told us was her niece, sat by her, playing on a guitar, while herself was at work, with the assistance of spectacles, and had a prayer-book, with the leaves folded down in several places, lying on the table before her. Perhaps, sir, I tire you with my minuteness; but the place, and every circumstance about it, is so impressed on my mind, that I shall never forget it.

I dined that day with Mr. Winbrooke alone. He lost by degrees that restraint which I perceived too well to hang about him before, and, with his former gaiety and good-humour, repeated the flattering things, which, though they had once been fatal, I durst not now distrust. At last, taking my hand and kissing it, It is thus, said he, that love will last, while freedom is preserved; thus let us ever be blest, without the galling thought that we are tied to a condition where we may cease to be so. I answered, That the world thought otherwise; that it had certain ideas of good

fame, which it was impossible not to wish to maintain. The world, said he, is a tyrant; they are slaves who obey it: let us be happy without the pale of the world. Tomorrow I shall leave this quarter of it, for one where the talkers of the world shall be foiled, and lose us. Could not my Emily accompany me; my friend, my companion, the mistress of my soul! Nay, do not look so, Emily! your father may grieve for a while, but your father shall be taken care of; this bank-bill I intend as the comfort for his daughter.

I could contain myself no longer: Wretch! I exclaimed, dost thou imagine that my father's heart could brook dependence on the destroyer of his child, and tamely accept of a base equivalent for her honour and his own? Honour, my Emily, said he, is the word of fools, or of those wiser men who cheat them. 'Tis a fantastic bauble that does not suit the gravity of your father's age; but, whatever it is, I am afraid it can never be perfectly restored to you: exchange the word then, and let pleasure be your object now. At these words he clasped me in his arms, and pressed his lips rudely to my bosom. I started from my seat. Perfidious villain! said I, who darest insult the weakness thou hast undone; were that father here, thy coward soul would shrink from the vengeance of his honour! Curst be that wretch who has deprived him of it! oh! doubly curst, who has dragged on his hoary head the infamy which should have crushed her own! I snatched a knife which lay beside me, and would have plunged it in my breast; but the monster prevented my purpose, and smiling with a grin of barbarous insult, Madam, said he, I confess you are rather too much in heroics for me: I am sorry we should differ about trifles; but as I seem somehow to have offended you, I would willingly remedy it by taking my leave. You have been put to some foolish expense in this journey on my account; allow me to reimburse you.

So saying, he laid a bank-bill, of what amount I had no patience to see, upon the table. Shame, grief, and indignation, choked my utterance; unable to speak my wrongs, and unable to bear them in silence, I fell in a swoon at his feet.

What happened in the interval I cannot tell; but when I came to myself, I was in the arms of the landlady, with her niece chafing my temples, and doing all in her power for my recovery. She had much compassion in her countenance: the old woman assumed the softest look she was capable of, and both endeavoured to bring me comfort. They continued to show me many civilities, and even the aunt began to be less disagreeable in my sight. To the wretched, to the forlorn, as I was, small offices of kindness are endearing.

Mean time my money was far spent, nor did I attempt to conceal my wants from their knowledge. I had frequent thoughts of returning to my father; but the dread of a life of scorn is insurmountable. I avoided therefore going abroad when I had a chance of being seen by any former acquaintance, nor indeed did my health for a great while permit it; and suffered the old woman, at her own suggestion, to call me niece at home, where we now and then saw (when they could prevail on me to leave my room) one or two other elderly women, and sometimes a grave business-like man, who showed great compassion for my indisposition, and made me very obligingly an offer of a room at his country-house, for the recovery of my health. This offer I did not choose to accept; but told my landlady, that I should be glad to be employed in any way of business which my skill in needle-work could recommend me to; confessing, at the same time, that I was afraid I should scarce be able to pay her what I already owed for board and lodging; and that for her other good offices I had nothing but thanks to give her.

My dear child, said she, do not talk of paying; since I lost my own sweet girl (here she wept), your very picture she was, Miss Emily, I have nobody except my niece, to whom I should leave any little thing I have been able to save: you shall live with me, my dear; and I have sometimes a little millinery work, in which, when you are inclined to it, you may assist us. By the way, here are a pair of ruffles we have just finished for that gentleman you saw here at tea; a distant relation of mine, and a worthy man he is. 'Twas pity you refused the offer of an apartment at his country-house; my niece, you know, was to have accompanied you, and you might have fancied yourself at home: a most sweet place it is, and but a short mile beyond Hampstead. Who knows, Miss Emily, what effect such a visit might have had! if I had half your beauty, I should not waste it pining after e'er a worthless fellow of them all. I felt my heart swell at her words; I would have been angry if I could; but I was in that stupid state which is not easily awakened to anger: when I would have chid her, the reproof stuck in my throat; I could only weep!

Her want of respect increased, as I had not spirit to assert it: my work was now rather imposed than offered, and I became a drudge for the bread I ate: but my dependence and servility grew in proportion, and I was now in a situation which could not make any extraordinary exertions to disengage itself from either;—I found myself with child.

At last the wretch, who had thus trained me to destruction, hinted the purpose for which those means had been used. I discovered her to be an artful procuress for the pleasures of those, who are men of decency to the world in the midst of debauchery.

I roused every spark of courage within me at the horrid proposal. She treated my passion at first somewhat mildly; but when I continued to exert it, she

resented it with insult, and told me plainly, That if I did not soon comply with her desires, I should pay her every farthing I owed, or rot in a jail for life. I trembled at the thought; still, however, I resisted her importunities, and she put her threats in execution. I was conveyed to prison, weak from my condition, weaker from that struggle of grief and misery which for some time I had suffered. A miscarriage was the consequence.

Amidst all the horrors of such a state, surrounded with wretches totally callous, lost alike to humanity and to shame, think, Mr. Harley, think what I endured; nor wonder that I at last yielded to the solicitations of that miscreant I had seen at her house, and sunk to the prostitution which he tempted. But that was happiness compared to what I have suffered since. He soon abandoned me to the common use of the town, and I was cast among those miserable beings in whose society I have since remained.

Oh! did the daughters of virtue know our sufferings; did they see our hearts torn with anguish amidst the affectation of gaiety which our faces are obliged to assume! our bodies tortured by disease, our minds with that consciousness which they cannot lose! Did they know, did they think of this, Mr. Harley!—their censures are just; but their pity perhaps might spare the wretches, whom their justice should condemn!

Last night, but for an exertion of benevolence which the infection of our infamy prevents even in the humane, I had been thrust out from this miserable place which misfortune has yet left me; exposed to the brutal insults of drunkenness, or dragged by that justice which I could not bribe, to the punishment which may correct, but alas! can never amend the abandoned objects of its terrors. From that, Mr. Harley, your goodness has relieved me.

He beckoned with his hand: he would have stopped

the mention of his favours; but he could not speak, had it been to beg a diadem.

She saw his tears; her fortitude began to fail at the sight, when the voice of some stranger on the stairs awakened her attention. She listened for a moment; then starting up, exclaimed, Merciful God! my father's voice!

She had scarce uttered the word, when the door burst open, and a man entered in the garb of an officer. When he discovered his daughter and Harley, he started back a few paces; his look assumed a furious wildness, he laid his hand on his sword. The two objects of his wrath did not utter a syllable. Villain, he cried, thou seest a father who had once a daughter's honour to preserve; blasted as it now is, behold him ready to avenge its loss!

Harley had by this time some power of utterance. Sir, said he, if you will be a moment calm—Infamous coward! interrupted the other, dost thou preach calmness to wrongs like mine? He drew his sword. Sir, said Harley, let me tell you—The blood ran quicker to his cheek—his pulse beat one—no more—and regained the temperament of humanity!—You are deceived, sir, said he, you are much deceived; but I forgive suspicions which your misfortunes have justified: I would not wrong you, upon my soul I would not, for the dearest gratification of a thousand worlds; my heart bleeds for you!

His daughter was now prostrate at his feet. Strike, said she, strike here a wretch, whose misery cannot end but with that death she deserves. Her hair had fallen on her shoulders; her look had the horrid calmness of out-breathed despair. Her father would have spoken; his lip quivered, his cheek grew pale; his eyes lost the lightning of their fury; there was a reproach in them, but with a mingling of pity. He

turned them up to heaven—then on his daughter.—He laid his left hand on his heart—the sword dropped from his right—he burst into tears.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The distresses of a father.

HARLEY kneeled also at the side of the unfortunate daughter: Allow me, sir, said he, to entreat your pardon for one whose offences have been already so signally punished. I know, I feel, that those tears, wrung from the heart of a father, are more dreadful to her than all the punishments your sword could have inflicted: accept the contrition of a child whom Heaven has restored to you Is she not lost, answered he, irrecoverably lost? Damnation! a common prostitute to the meanest ruffian!—Calmly, my dear sir, said Harley, did you know by what complicated misfortunes she had fallen to that miserable state in which you now behold her, I should have no need of words to excite your compassion. Think, sir, of what once she was! Would you abandon her to the insults of an unfeeling world, deny her opportunity of penitence, and cut off the little comfort that still remains for your afflictions and her own! Speak, said he, addressing himself to his daughter; speak, I will hear thee.—The desperation that supported her was lost: she fell to the ground, and bathed his feet with her tears.

Harley undertook her cause: he related the treacheries to which she had fallen a sacrifice, and again solicited the forgiveness of her father. He looked on her for some time in silence: the pride of a soldier's honour checked for a while the yearnings of his heart;

but nature at last prevailed, he fell on her neck, and mingled his tears with hers.

Harley, who discovered from the dress of the stranger that he was just arrived from a journey, begged that they would both remove to his lodgings, till he could procure others for them. Atkins looked at him with some marks of surprise. His daughter now first recovered the power of speech: Wretch as I am, said she, yet there is some gratitude due to the preserver of your child. See him now before you. To him I owe my life, or at least the comfort of imploring your forgiveness before I die. Pardon me, young gentleman, said Atkins, I fear my passion wronged you.

Never, never, sir, said Harley; if it had, your reconciliation to your daughter were an atonement a thousand fold. He then repeated his request that he might be allowed to conduct them to his lodgings; to which Mr. Atkins at last consented. He took his daughter's arm. Come, my Emily, said he, we can never, never recover that happiness we have lost; but time may teach us to remember our misfortunes with patience.

When they arrived at the house where Harley lodged, he was informed the first floor was then vacant, and that the gentleman and his daughter might be accommodated there. While he was upon his inquiry, Miss Atkins informed her father more particularly what she owed to his benevolence. When he turned into the room where they were, Atkins ran and embraced him; begged him again to forgive the offence he had given him, and made the warmest protestations of gratitude for his favours. We would attempt to describe the joy which Harley felt on this occasion, did it not occur to us, that one half of the world could not understand it though we did; and the other half will, by this time, have understood it without any description at all.

Miss Atkins now retired to her chamber, to take some rest from the violence of the emotions she had suffered. When she was gone, her father, addressing himself to Harley, said, You have a right, sir, to be informed of the present situation of one who owes so much to your compassion for his misfortunes. My daughter I find has informed you what that was at the fatal juncture when they began. Her distresses you have heard, you have pitied as they deserved; with mine, perhaps, I cannot so easily make you acquainted. You have a feeling heart, Mr. Harley; I bless it that it has saved my child; but you never were a father, a father torn by that most dreadful of calamities, the dishonour of a child he doted on! You have been already informed of some of the circumstances of her elopement. I was then from home, called by the death of a relation, who, though he would never advance me a shilling on the utmost exigency in his lifetime, left me all the gleanings of his frugality at his death. I would not write this intelligence to my daughter, because I intended to be the bearer myself; and as soon as my business would allow me, I set out on my return, winged with all the haste of paternal affection. I fondly built those schemes of future happiness, which present prosperity is ever busy to suggest: my Emily was concerned in them all. As I approached our little dwelling, my heart throbbed with the anticipation of joy and welcome. I imagined the cheering fire, the blissful contentment of a frugal meal, made luxurious by a daughter's smile: I painted to myself her surprise at the tidings of our new-acquired riches, our fond disputes about the disposal of them.

The road was shortened by the dreams of happiness I enjoyed, and it began to be dark as I reached the house: I alighted from my horse, and walked softly up stairs to the room we commonly sat in. I was somewhat disappointed at not finding my daughter

there. I rang the bell, her maid appeared, and showed no small signs of wonder at the summons. She blessed herself as she entered the room: I smiled at her surprise. Where is Miss Emily, sir? said she. Emily! Yes, sir; she has been gone hence some days, upon receipt of those letters you sent her. Letters! said I. Yes, sir; so she told me, and went off in all haste that very night.

I stood aghast as she spoke; but was able so far to recollect myself, as to put on the affectation of calmness; and telling her there was certainly some mistake in the affair, desired her to leave me.

When she was gone I threw myself into a chair, in that state of uncertainty which is of all others the most dreadful. The gay visions with which I had delighted myself vanished in an instant: I was tortured with tracing back the same circle of doubt and disappointment. My head grew dizzy as I thought: I called the servant again, and asked her a hundred questions to no purpose; there was not room even for conjecture.

Something at last arose in my mind, which we call hope, without knowing what it is. I wished myself deluded by it, but it could not prevail over my returning fears. I rose and walked through the room. My Emily's spinnet stood at the end of it, open, with a book of music folded down at some of my favourite lessons. I touched the keys; there was a vibration in the sound that froze my blood: I looked around, and methought the family-pictures on the walls gazed on me with compassion in their faces. I sat down again with an attempt at more composure; I started at every creaking of the door, and my ears rang with imaginary noises!

I had not remained long in this situation, when the arrival of a friend, who had accidentally heard of my return, put an end to my doubts, by the recital of my

daughter's dishonour. He told me he had his information from a young gentleman, to whom Winbrooke had boasted of having seduced her.

I started from my seat, with broken curses on my lips, and, without knowing whither I should pursue them, ordered my servant to load my pistols and saddle my horses. My friend, however, with great difficulty, persuaded me to compose myself for that night, promising to accompany me on the morrow to Sir George Winbrooke's in quest of his son.

The morrow came, after a night spent in a state little distant from madness. We went as early as decency would allow to Sir George's: he received me with politeness, and indeed compassion; protested his abhorrence of his son's conduct, and told me, that he had set out some days before for London, on which place he had procured a draft for a large sum, on pretence of finishing his travels; but that he had not heard from him since his departure.

I did not wait for any more, either of information or comfort, but, against the united remonstrances of Sir George and my friend, set out instantly for London, with a frantic uncertainty of purpose: but there all manner of search was in vain. I could trace neither of them any further than the inn where they first put up on their arrival; and, after some days fruitless inquiry, returned home destitute of every little hope that had hitherto supported me. The journeys I had made, the restless nights I had spent, above all, the perturbation of my mind, had the effect which naturally might be expected; a very dangerous fever was the consequence. From this, however, contrary to the expectations of my physicians, I recovered. It was now that I first felt something like calmness of mind; probably from being reduced to a state which could not produce the exertions of anguish or despair. A stupid melancholy settled on my soul; I could

endure to live with an apathy of life; at times I forgot my resentment, and wept at the remembrance of my child.

Such has been the tenor of my days since that fatal moment when these misfortunes began, till yesterday, that I received a letter from a friend in town, acquainting me of her present situation. Could such tales as mine, Mr. Harley, be sometimes suggested to the daughters of levity, did they but know with what anxiety the heart of a parent flutters round the child he loves, they would be less apt to construe into harshness that delicate concern for their conduct, which they often complain of as laying restraint upon things, to the young, the gay, and the thoughtless, seemingly harmless and indifferent. Alas! I fondly imagined that I needed not even these common cautions! my Emily was the joy of my age, and the pride of my soul!—Those things are now no more! they are lost for ever! Her death I could have borne! but the death of her honour has added obloquy and shame to that sorrow which bends my gray hairs to the dust!

As he spoke these last words, his voice trembled in his throat; it was now lost in his tears. He sat with his face half turned from Harley, as if he would have hid the sorrow which he felt. Harley was in the same attitude himself; he durst not meet his eye with a tear; but gathering his stifled breath, Let me entreat you, sir, said he, to hope better things. The world is ever tyrannical; it warps our sorrows to edge them with keener affliction: let us not be slaves to the names it affixes to motive or to action. I know an ingenuous mind cannot help feeling when they sting; but there are considerations by which it may be overcome: its fantastic ideas vanish as they rise: they teach us—to look beyond it.

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A FRAGMENT.

Showing his success with the Baronet.

* * * The card he received was in the politest style in which disappointment could be communicated: the baronet was under a necessity of giving up his application for Mr. Harley, as he was informed, that the lease was engaged for a gentleman who had long served his majesty in another capacity, and whose merit had entitled him to the first lucrative thing that should be vacant. Even Harley could not murmur at such a disposal. Perhaps, said he to himself, some war-worn officer, who, like poor Atkins, had been neglected from reasons which merited the highest advancement; whose honour could not stoop to solicit the preferment he deserved: perhaps, with a family, taught the principles of delicacy, without the means of supporting it; a wife and children——gracious heaven! whom my wishes would have deprived of bread!—

He was interrupted in his reverie by some one tapping him on the shoulder; and, on turning round, he discovered it to be the very man who had explained to him the condition of his gay companion at Hyde-park corner. I am glad to see you, sir, said he; I believe we are fellows in disappointment. Harley started, and said that he was at a loss to understand him. Poh! you need not be so shy, answered the other; every one for himself is but fair, and I had much rather you had got it than the rascally gauger. Harley still protested his ignorance of what he meant. Why, the lease of Bancroft-manor; had not you been applying for it?—I confess I was, replied Harley; but I cannot conceive how you should be interested in the matter.—Why, I was making interest for it myself, said he, and I think I had some title: I voted for this same baronet at the

last election, and made some of my friends do so too; though I would not have you imagine that I sold my vote; no, I scorn it, let me tell you I scorn it; but I thought as how this man was staunch and true, and I find he's but a double-faced fellow after all, and speechifies in the house for any side he hopes to make most by. Oh! how many fine speeches and squeezings by the hand we had of him on the canvass! And if ever I shall be so happy as to have an opportunity of serving you—a murrain on the smooth-tongued knave! and after all to get it for this pimp of a gauger.—The gauger! there must be some mistake, said Harley: he writes me, that it was engaged for one whose long services—Services! interrupted the other, you shall hear: Services! Yes, his sister arrived in town a few days ago, and is now sempstress to the baronet. A plague on all rogues! says honest Sam Wrightson; I shall but just drink damnation to them to-night, in a crown's-worth of Ashley's, and leave London to-morrow by sun-rise.—I shall leave it too, said Harley; and so he accordingly did.

In passing through Piccadilly, he had observed on the window of an inn a notification of the departure of a stage-coach for a place in his road homewards; in the way back to his lodgings, he took a seat in it for his return.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

He leaves London.—Characters in a stage-coach.

The company in the stage-coach consisted of a grocer and his wife, who were going to pay a visit to some of their country friends; a young officer, who took this way of marching to quarters; a middle-aged gentlewoman, who had been hired as housekeeper to

some family in the country; and an elderly well-looking man with a remarkable old-fashioned perriwig.

Harley, upon entering, discovered but one vacant seat, next the grocer's wife, which, from his natural shyness of temper, he made no scruple to occupy, however aware that riding backwards always disagreed with him.

Though his inclination to physiognomy had met with some rubs in the metropolis, he had not yet lost his attachment to that science: he set himself therefore to examine, as usual, the countenances of his companions. Here indeed he was not long in doubt as to the preference; for besides that the elderly gentleman, who sat opposite to him, had features by nature more expressive of good dispositions, there was something in that perriwig we mentioned, peculiarly attractive of Harley's regard.

He had not been long employed in these speculations, when he found himself attacked with that faintish sickness, which was the natural consequence of his situation in the coach. The paleness of his countenance was first observed by the housekeeper, who immediately made offer of her smelling-bottle, which Harley however declined, telling at the same time the cause of his uneasiness.

The gentleman on the opposite side of the coach now first turned his eye from the side-direction in which it had been fixed, and begged Harley to exchange places with him, expressing his regret that he had not made the proposal before. Harley thanked him, and, upon being assured that both seats were alike to him, was about to accept of his offer, when the young gentleman of the sword, putting on an arch look, laid hold of the other's arm. So, my old boy, said he, I find you have still some youthful blood about you; but, with your leave, I will do myself the honour of sitting by this lady; and took his place accord-

ingly. The grocer stared him as full in the face as his own short neck would allow; and his wife, who was a little round-faced woman, with a great deal of colour in her cheeks, drew up at the compliment that was paid her, looking first at the officer, and then at the housekeeper.

This incident was productive of some discourse; for before, though there was sometimes a cough or a hem from the grocer, and the officer now and then humm'd a few notes of a song, there had not a single word passed the lips of any of the company.

Mrs. Grocer observed, how ill-convenient it was for people, who could not be drove backwards, to travel in a stage. This brought on a dissertation on stage-coaches in general, and the pleasure of keeping a chay of one's own; which led to another on the great riches of Mr. Deputy Bearskin, who, according to her, had once been of that industrious order of youths who sweep the crossings of the streets for the conveniency of passengers, but, by various fortunate accidents, had now acquired an immense fortune, and kept his coach and a dozen livery-servants. All this afforded ample fund for conversation, if conversation it might be called, that was carried on solely by the before-mentioned lady, nobody offering to interrupt her, except that the officer sometimes signified his approbation by a variety of oaths, a sort of phraseology in which he seemed extremely versant. She appealed indeed frequently to her husband for the authenticity of certain facts, of which the good man as often protested his total ignorance; but as he was always called fool, or something very like it, for his pains, he at last contrived to support the credit of his wife without prejudice to his conscience, and signified his assent by a noise not unlike the grunting of that animal which in shape and fatness he somewhat resembled.

The housekeeper, and the old gentleman who sat

next to Harley, were now observed to be fast asleep; at which the lady, who had been at such pains to entertain them, muttered some words of displeasure, and, upon the officer's whispering to smoke the old put, both she and her husband pursed up their mouths into a contemptuous smile. Harley looked sternly on the grocer: You are come, sir, said he, to those years when you might have learned some reverence for age: as for this young man, who has so lately escaped from the nursery, he may be allowed to divert himself. Dam'-me, sir, said the officer, do you call me young? striking up the front of his hat, and stretching forward on his seat, till his face almost touched Harley's. It is probable, however, that he discovered something there which tended to pacify him; for, on the lady's entreating them not to quarrel, he very soon resumed his posture and calmness together, and was rather less profuse of his oaths during the rest of the journey.

It is possible the old gentleman had waked time enough to hear the last part of this discourse; at least, (whether from that cause, or that he too was a physiognomist,) he wore a look remarkably complacent to Harley, who, on his part, showed a particular observance of him: indeed they had soon a better opportunity of making their acquaintance, as the coach arrived that night at the town where the officer's regiment lay, and the places of destination of their other fellow-travellers, it seems, were at no great distance; for next morning the old gentleman and Harley were the only passengers remaining.

When they left the inn in the morning, Harley, pulling out a little pocket-book, began to examine the contents, and make some corrections with a pencil. This, said he, turning to his companion, is an amusement with which I sometimes pass idle hours at an inn: these are quotations from those humble poets, who trust their fame to the brittle tenure of windows

and drinking-glasses. From our inns, returned the gentleman, a stranger might imagine that we were a nation of poets: machines at least containing poetry, which the motion of a journey emptied of their contents: Is it from the vanity of being thought geniuses, or a mere mechanical imitation of the custom of others, that we are tempted to scrawl rhyme upon such places?

Whether vanity is the cause of our becoming rhymesters or not, answered Harley, it is a pretty certain effect of it. An old man of my acquaintance, who deals in apophthegms, used to say, That he had known few men without envy, few wits without ill-nature, and no poet without vanity; and I believe his remark is a pretty just one: vanity has been immemorially the charter of poets. In this the ancients were more honest than we are: the old poets frequently made boastful predictions of the immortality their works will obtain for them; ours, in their dedications and prefatory discourses, employ much eloquence to praise their patrons, and much seeming modesty to condemn themselves, or at least to apologize for their productions to the world: but this, in my opinion, is the more assuming manner of the two; for, of all the garbs I ever saw Pride put on, that of her humility is to me the most disgusting.

It is natural enough for a poet to be vain, said the stranger: the little worlds which he raises, the inspiration which he claims, may easily be productive of self-importance; though that inspiration is fabulous, it brings on egotism, which is always the parent of vanity.

It may be supposed, answered Harley, that inspiration of old was an article of religious faith; in modern times it may be translated a propensity to compose; and I believe it is not always most readily found where the poets have fixed its residence, amidst groves and

plains, and the scenes of pastoral retirement. The mind may be there unbent from the cares of the world; but it will frequently, at the same time, be unnerved from any great exertion; it will feel imperfection, and wander without effort over the regions of reflection.

There is at least, said the stranger, one advantage in the poetical inclination, that it is an incentive to philanthropy. There is a certain poetic ground, on which a man cannot tread without feelings that enlarge the heart; the causes of human depravity vanish before the romantic enthusiasm he professes, and many who are not able to reach the Parnassian heights, may yet approach so near as to be bettered by the air of the climate.

I have always thought so, replied Harley, but this is an argument with the prudent against it: they urge the danger of unfitness for the world.

I allow it, returned the other; but I believe it is not always rightfully imputed to the bent for poetry: that is only one effect of the common cause.—Jack, says his father, is indeed no scholar; nor could all the drubbings from his master ever bring him one step forward in his accidence or syntax; but I intend him for a merchant.—Allow the same indulgence to Tom —Tom reads Virgil and Horace when he should be casting accounts; and but t'other day he pawned his great-coat for an edition of Shakespeare.—But Tom would have been as he is, though Virgil and Horace had never been born, though Shakespeare had died a link-boy; for his nurse will tell you, that when he was a child, he broke his rattle, to discover what it was that sounded within it; and burnt the sticks of his go-cart, because he liked to see the sparkling of timber in the fire.—'Tis a sad case; but what is to be done?—Why, Jack shall make a fortune, dine on venison, and drink claret,—Aye, but Tom—Tom shall dine with

his brother, when his pride will let him; at other times, he shall bless God over a half-pint of ale and a Welsh-rabbit; and both shall go to heaven as they may.—That's a poor prospect for Tom, says the father. —To go to heaven! I cannot agree with him.

Perhaps, said Harley, we now a-days discourage the romantic turn a little too much. Our boys are prudent too soon. Mistake me not, I do not mean to blame them for want of levity or dissipation; but their pleasures are those of hackneyed vice, blunted to every finer emotion by the repetition of debauch; and their desire of pleasure is warped to the desire of wealth, as the means of procuring it. The immense riches acquired by individuals have erected a standard of ambition, destructive of private morals and of public virtue. The weaknesses of vice are left us; but the most allowable of our failings we are taught to despise. Love, the passion most natural to the sensibility of youth, has lost the plaintive dignity he once possessed, for the unmeaning simper of a dangling coxcomb; and the only serious concern, that of a dowry, is settled, even amongst the beardless leaders of the dancing-school. The Frivolous and the Interested (might a satirist say) are the characteristical features of the age; they are visible even in the essays of our philosophers. They laugh at the pedantry of our fathers, who complained of the times in which they lived; they are at pains to persuade us how much those were deceived, they pride themselves in defending things as they find them, and in exploding the barren sounds which had been reared into motives for action. To this their style is suited; and the manly tone of reason is exchanged for perpetual efforts at sneer and ridicule. This I hold to be an alarming crisis in the corruption of a state; when not only is virtue declined, and vice prevailing, but when the praises of virtue are forgotten, and the infamy of vice unfelt.

They soon after arrived at the next inn upon the route of the stage-coach, when the stranger told Harley, that his brother's house, to which he was returning, lay at no great distance, and he must therefore unwillingly bid him adieu.

I should like, said Harley, taking his hand, to have some word to remember so much seeming worth by: My name is Harley.—I shall remember it, answered the old gentleman, in my prayers; mine is Silton.

And Silton indeed it was! Ben Silton himself! Once more, my honoured friend, farewell!——Born to be happy without the world, to that peaceful happiness which the world has not to bestow! Envy never scowled on thy life, nor hatred smiled on thy grave.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

He meets an old acquaintance.

WHEN the stage-coach arrived at the place of its destination, Harley began to consider how he should proceed the remaining part of his journey. He was very civilly accosted by the master of the inn, who offered to accommodate him either with a post-chaise or horses, to any distance he had a mind; but as he did things frequently in a way different from what other people call natural, he refused these offers, and set out immediately a-foot, having first put a spare shirt in his pocket, and given directions for the forwarding of his portmanteau. This was a method of travelling which he was accustomed to take; it saved the trouble of provision for any animal but himself, and left him at liberty to choose his quarters, either at an inn, or at the first cottage in which he saw a face he liked: nay, when he was not peculiarly attracted by the reasonable creation, he would sometimes consort with a species

of inferior rank, and lay himself down to sleep by the side of a rock, or on the banks of a rivulet. He did few things without a motive, but his motives were rather eccentric: and the useful and expedient were terms which he held to be very indefinite, and which therefore he did not always apply to the sense in which they are commonly understood.

The sun was now in his decline, and the evening remarkably serene, when he entered a hollow part of the road, which winded between the surrounding banks, and seamed the sward in different lines, as the choice of travellers had directed them to tread it. It seemed to be little frequented now, for some of those had partly recovered their former verdure. The scene was such as induced Harley to stand and enjoy it; when, turning round, his notice was attracted by an object, which the fixture of his eye on the spot he walked had before prevented him from observing.

An old man, who from his dress seemed to have been a soldier, lay fast asleep on the ground; a knapsack rested on a stone at his right hand, while his staff and brass-hilted sword were crossed at his left.

Harley looked on him with the most earnest attention. He was one of those figures which Salvator would have drawn; nor was the surrounding scenery unlike the wildness of that painter's back-grounds. The banks on each side were covered with fantastic shrub-wood, and at a little distance, on the top of one of them, stood a finger-post to mark the directions of two roads which diverged from the point where it was placed. A rock, with some dangling wild flowers, jutted out above where the soldier lay; on which grew the stump of a large tree, white with age, and a single twisted branch shaded his face as he slept. His face had the marks of manly comeliness impaired by time; his forehead was not altogether bald, but his hairs might have been numbered; while a few white

locks behind crossed the brown of his neck with a contrast the most venerable to a mind like Harley's. Thou art old, said he to himself; but age has not brought thee rest for its infirmities: I fear those silver hairs have not found shelter from thy country, though that neck has been bronzed in its service. The stranger waked. He looked at Harley with the appearance of some confusion: it was a pain the latter knew too well to think of causing in another; he turned and went on. The old man readjusted his knapsack, and followed in one of the tracks on the opposite side of the road.

When Harley heard the tread of his feet behind him, he could not help stealing back a glance at his fellow-traveller. He seemed to bend under the weight of his knapsack; he halted on his walk, and one of his arms was supported by a sling, and lay motionless across his breast. He had that steady look of sorrow, which indicates that its owner has gazed upon his griefs till he has forgotten to lament them; yet not without those streaks of complacency, which a good mind will sometimes throw into the countenance, through all the incumbent load of its depression.

He had now advanced nearer to Harley, and, with an uncertain sort of voice, begged to know what it was o'clock; I fear, said he, sleep has beguiled me of my time, and I shall hardly have light enough left to carry me to the end of my journey. Father! said Harley (who by this time found the romantic enthusiasm rising within him), how far do you mean to go? But a little way, sir, returned the other; and indeed it is but a little way I can manage now; 'tis just four miles from the height to the village, whither I am going. I am going thither too, said Harley; we may make the road shorter to each other. You seem to have served your country, sir; to have served it hardly too; 'tis a character I have the highest esteem for. I

would not be impertinently inquisitive; but there is that in your appearance which excites my curiosity to know something more of you: in the mean time, suffer me to carry that knapsack.

The old man gazed on him: a tear stood in his eye. Young gentleman, said he, you are too good; may Heaven bless you for an old man's sake, who has nothing but his blessing to give! but my knapsack is so familiar to my shoulders, that I should walk the worse for wanting it; and it would be troublesome to you, who have not been used to its weight. Far from it, answered Harley, I should tread the lighter; it would be the most honourable badge I ever wore.

Sir, said the stranger, who had looked earnestly in Harley's face during the last part of his discourse, is not your name Harley? It is, replied he; I am ashamed to say I have forgotten yours. You may well have forgotten my face, said the stranger;—'tis a long time since you saw it; but possibly you may remember something of old Edwards.——Edwards! cried Harley, oh! heavens! and sprung to embrace him; let me clasp those knees on which I have sat so often: Edwards!——I shall never forget that fire-side, round which I have been so happy! But where, where have you been? where is Jack? where is your daughter? How has it fared with them, when fortune, I fear, has been so unkind to you?—'Tis a long tale, replied Edwards; but I will try to tell it you as we walk.

When you were at school in the neighbourhood, you remember me at South-hill: that farm had been possessed by my father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, which last was a younger brother of that very man's ancestor who is now lord of the manor. I thought I managed it, as they had done, with prudence; I paid my rent regularly as it became due, and had always as much behind as gave bread to me and my

children. But my last lease was out soon after you left that part of the country; and the 'squire, who had lately got a London attorney for his steward, would not renew it, because, he said, he did not choose to have any farm under 300*l.* a-year value on his estate; but offered to give me the preference on the same terms with another, if I chose to take the one he had marked out, of which mine was a part.

What could I do, Mr. Harley? I feared the undertaking was too great for me; yet to leave, at my age, the house I had lived in from my cradle! I could not, Mr. Harley, I could not; there was not a tree about it that I did not look on as my father, my brother, or my child: so I even ran the risk, and took the 'squire's offer of the whole. But I had soon reason to repent of my bargain; the steward had taken care that my former farm should be the best land of the division; I was obliged to hire more servants, and I could not have my eye over them all; some unfavourable seasons followed one another, and I found my affairs entangling on my hands. To add to my distress, a considerable corn-factor turned bankrupt with a sum of mine in his possession: I failed paying my rent so punctually as I was wont to do, and the same steward had my stock taken in execution in a few days after. So, Mr. Harley, there was an end to my prosperity. However, there was as much produced from the sale of my effects as paid my debts and saved me from a jail: I thank God I wronged no man, and the world could never charge me with dishonesty.

Had you seen us, Mr. Harley, when we were turned out of South-hill, I am sure you would have wept at the sight. You remember old Trusty, my shag house-dog; I shall never forget it while I live; the poor creature was blind with age, and could scarce crawl after us to the door; he went however as far as the gooseberry-bush, which you may remember stood on

the left side of the yard: he was wont to bask in the sun there; when he had reached that spot, he stopped; we went on: I called to him; he wagged his tail, but did not stir; I called again; he lay down: I whistled, and cried Trusty; he gave a short howl, and died! I could have laid down and died too; but God gave me strength to live for my children.

The old man now paused a moment to take breath. He eyed Harley's face; it was bathed with tears: the story was grown familiar to himself; he dropped one tear, and no more.

Though I was poor, continued he, I was not altogether without credit. A gentleman in the neighbourhood, who had a small farm unoccupied at the time, offered to let me have it, on giving security for the rent; which I made shift to procure. It was a piece of ground which required management to make any thing of; but it was nearly within the compass of my son's labour and my own. We exerted all our industry to bring it into some heart. We began to succeed tolerably, and lived contented on its produce, when an unlucky accident brought us under the displeasure of a neighbouring justice of the peace, and broke all our family happiness again.

My son was a remarkably good shooter; he had always kept a pointer on our former farm, and thought no harm in doing so now; when one day, having sprung a covey in our own ground, the dog, of his own accord, followed them into the justice's. My son laid down his gun, and went after his dog to bring him back: the game-keeper, who had marked the birds, came up, and, seeing the pointer, shot him just as my son approached. The creature fell; my son ran up to him; he died with a complaining sort of cry at his master's feet. Jack could bear it no longer; but, flying at the game-keeper, wrenched his gun out of his

hand, and with the butt end of it felled him to the ground.

He had scarce got home, when a constable came with a warrant, and dragged him to prison; there he lay, for the justices would not take bail, till he was tried at the quarter-sessions for the assault and battery. His fine was hard upon us to pay; we contrived, however, to live the worse for it, and make up the loss by our frugality; but the justice was not content with that punishment, and soon after had an opportunity of punishing us indeed.

An officer with press-orders came down to our country, and, having met with the justices, agreed that they should pitch on a certain number, who could most easily be spared from the county, of whom he would take care to clear it; my son's name was in the justices' list.

'Twas on a Christmas-eve, and the birth-day too of my son's little boy. The night was piercing cold, and it blew a storm, with showers of hail and snow. We had made up a cheering fire in an inner room; I sat before it in my wicker-chair, blessing Providence, that had still left a shelter for me and my children. My son's two little ones were holding their gambols around us; my heart warmed at the sight; I brought a bottle of my best ale, and all our misfortunes were forgotten.

It had long been our custom to play a game at blind-man's buff on that night, and it was not omitted now; so to it we fell, I, and my son, and his wife, the daughter of a neighbouring farmer, who happened to be with us at the time, the two children, and an old maid servant, who had lived with me from a child. The lot fell on my son to be blindfolded: we had continued some time in our game, when he groped his way into an outer room in pursuit of some of us, who, he imagined, had taken shelter there; we kept snug

in our places, and enjoyed his mistake. He had not been long there, when he was suddenly seized from behind; I shall have you now, said he, and turned about. Shall you so, master? answered the ruffian who had laid hold of him; we shall make you play at another sort of game by-and-by.—At these words Harley started with a convulsive sort of motion, and grasping Edwards's sword drew it half out of the scabbard, with a look of the most frantic wildness. Edwards gently replaced it in its sheath, and went on with his relation.

On hearing these words in a strange voice, we all rushed out to discover the cause: the room by this time was almost full of the gang. My daughter-in-law fainted at the sight; the maid and I ran to assist her, while my poor son remained motionless, gazing by turns on his children and their mother. We soon recovered her to life, and begged her to retire and wait the issue of the affair; but she flew to her husband, and clung round him in an agony of terror and grief.

In the gang was one of a smoother aspect, whom, by his dress, we discovered to be a serjeant of foot; he came up to me, and told me that my son had his choice of the sea or land service, whispering at the same time, that, if he chose the land, he might get off on procuring him another man, and paying a certain sum for his freedom. The money we could just muster up in the house, by the assistance of the maid, who produced, in a green bag, all the little savings of her service; but the man we could not expect to find. My daughter-in-law gazed upon her children with a look of the wildest despair: My poor infants! said she, your father is forced from you; who shall now labour for your bread? or must your mother beg for herself and you? I prayed her to be patient; but comfort I had none to give her. At last, calling the serjeant aside, I asked him if I was too old to be ac-

cepted in place of my son? Why, I don't know, said he; you are rather old, to be sure, but yet the money may do much. I put the money in his hand; and coming back to my children, Jack, said I, you are free; live to give your wife and these little ones bread; I will go, my child, in your stead: I have but little life to lose, and if I staid I should add one to the wretches you left behind. No, replied my son, I am not that coward you imagine me; Heaven forbid that my father's gray hairs should be so exposed, while I sat idle at home! I am young, and able to endure much, and God will take care of you and my family. Jack, said I, I will put an end to this matter; you have never hitherto disobeyed me; I will not be contradicted in this; stay at home, I charge you, for my sake, be kind to my children.

Our parting, Mr. Harley, I cannot describe to you; it was the first time we ever had parted; the very press-gang could scarce keep from tears; but the serjeant, who had seemed the softest before, was now the least moved of them all. He conducted me to a party of new-raised recruits, who lav at a village in the neighbourhood; and we soon after joined the regiment. I had not been long with it, when we were ordered to the East Indies, where I was soon made a serjeant, and might have picked up some money, if my heart had been as hard as some others were; but my nature was never of that kind, that could think of getting rich at the expense of my conscience.

Amongst our prisoners was an old Indian, whom some of our officers supposed to have a treasure hidden somewhere; which is no uncommon practice in that country. They pressed him to discover it. He declared he had none; but that would not satisfy them: so they ordered him to be tied to a stake, and suffer fifty lashes every morning till he should learn to speak out, as they said. Oh! Mr. Harley, had you

seen him, as I did, with his hands bound behind him, suffering in silence, while the big drops trickled down his shrivelled cheeks, and wet his gray beard; which some of the inhuman soldiers plucked in scorn! I could not bear it, I could not for my soul; and one morning, when the rest of the guard were out of the way, I found means to let him escape. I was tried by a court-martial for negligence of my post, and ordered, in compassion of my age, and having got this wound in my arm, and, that in my leg, in the service, only to suffer 300 lashes, and be turned out of the regiment; but my sentence was mitigated as to the lashes, and I had only 200. When I had suffered these, I was turned out of the camp, and had betwixt three and four hundred miles to travel before I could reach a sea-port, without a guide to conduct me, or money to buy me provisions by the way. I set out, however, resolved to walk as far as I could, and then to lay myself down and die. But I had scarce gone a mile, when I was met by the Indian whom I had delivered. He pressed me in his arms, and kissed the marks of the lashes on my back a thousand times; he led me to a little hut, where some friend of his dwelt; and, after I was recovered of my wounds, conducted me so far on my journey himself, and sent another Indian to guide me through the rest. When we parted, he pulled out a purse with two-hundred pieces of gold in it: Take this, said he, my dear preserver, it is all I have been able to procure. I begged him not to bring himself to poverty for my sake, who should probably have no need of it long; but he insisted on my accepting it. He embraced me:—You are an Englishman, said he, but the Great Spirit has given you an Indian heart; may he bear up the weight of your old age, and blunt the arrow that brings it rest! We parted; and not long after I made shift to get my passage to England. 'Tis but about a week since I landed,

and I am going to end my days in the arms of my son. This sum may be of use to him and his children; 'tis all the value I put upon it. I thank Heaven I never was covetous of wealth, I never had much, but was always so happy as to be content with my little.

When Edwards had ended his relation, Harley stood a while looking at him in silence; at last he pressed him in his arms; and when he had given vent to the fulness of his heart by a shower of tears, Edwards, said he, let me hold thee to my bosom; let me imprint the virtue of thy sufferings on my soul. Come, my honoured veteran! let me endeavour to soften the last days of a life worn out in the service of humanity: call me also thy son, and let me cherish thee as a father. Edwards, from whom the recollection of his own sufferings had scarce forced a tear, now blubbered like a boy; he could not speak his gratitude, but by some short exclamations of blessings upon Harley.

CHAPTER XXXV.

He misses an old acquaintance.—An adventure consequent upon it.

WHEN they had arrived within a little way of the village they journeyed to, Harley stopped short, and looked steadfastly on the mouldering walls of a ruined house that stood on the road-side. Oh, heavens! he cried, what do I see? silent, unroofed, and desolate! Are all thy gay tenants gone? Do I hear their hum no more? Edwards, look there, look there! the scene of my infant joys, my earliest friendships, laid waste and ruinous! That was the very school where I was boarded when you were at South-hill; 'tis but a twelvemonth since I saw it standing, and its benches filled with cherubs; that opposite side of the road was

the green on which they sported; see it now ploughed up! I would have given fifty times its value to have saved it from the sacrilege of that plough.

Dear sir, replied Edwards, perhaps they have left it from choice, and may have got anothet spot as good. They cannot, said Harley, they cannot; I shall never see the sward covered with its daisies, nor pressed by the dance of the dear innocents: I shall never see that stump decked with the garlands which their little hands had gathered. These two long stones which now lie at the foot of it, were once the supports of a hut I myself assisted to rear: I have sat on the sods within it, when we had spread our banquet of apples before us, and been more blest——oh! Edwards! infinitely more blest than ever I shall be again.

Just then a woman passed them on the road, and discovered some signs of wonder at the attitude of Harley, who stood, with his hands folded together, looking with a moistened eye on the fallen pillars of the hut. He was too much entranced in thought to observe her at all; but Edwards civilly accosted her, desired to know, if that had not been the school-house, and how it came into that condition in which they now saw it? Alack-a-day! said she, it was the school-house indeed; but to be sure, sir, the 'squire has pulled it down, because it stood in the way of his prospects. —What! how! prospects! pulled down! cried Harley. Yes, to be sure, sir; and the green, where the children used to play, he has ploughed up, because, he said, they hurt his fence on the other side of it.—— Curses on his narrow heart, cried Harley, that could violate a right so sacred! Heaven blast the wretch!

> "And from his derogate body never spring
> A babe to honour him!"

But I need not, Edwards, I need not, (recovering himself a little,) he is curst enough already: to him the

noblest source of happiness is denied; and the cares of his sordid soul shall gnaw it, while thou sittest over a brown crust, smiling on those mangled limbs that have saved thy son and his children! If you want any thing with the school-mistress, sir, said the woman, I can show you the way to her house. He followed her, without knowing whither he went.

They stopped at the door of a snug habitation; where sat an elderly woman with a boy and a girl before her, each of whom held a supper of bread and milk in their hands. There, sir, is the school-mistress.——Madam, said Harley, was not an old venerable man school-master here some time ago? Yes, sir, he was; poor man! the loss of his former school-house, I believe, broke his heart, for he died soon after it was taken down; and as another has not yet been found, I have that charge in the mean time.—And this boy and girl, I presume, are your pupils?—Ay, sir, they are poor orphans, put under my care by the parish; and more promising children I never saw. Orphans! said Harley. Yes, sir, of honest creditable parents as any in the parish; and it is a shame for some folks to forget their relations, at a time when they have most need to remember them.——Madam, said Harley, let us never forget that we are all relations. He kissed the children.

Their father, sir, continued she, was a farmer here in the neighbourhood, and a sober industrious man he was; but nobody can help misfortunes: what with bad crops, and bad debts, which are worse, his affairs went to wreck; and both he and his wife died of broken hearts. And a sweet couple they were, sir; there was not a properer man to look on in the county than John Edwards, and so indeed were all the Edwardses. What Edwardses? cried the old soldier hastily. The Edwardses of South-hill; and a worthy family they were.—South-hill! said he in a languid voice,

and fell back into the arms of the astonished Harley. The school-mistress ran for some water and a smelling-bottle, with the assistance of which they soon recovered the unfortunate Edwards. He stared wildly for some time, then folding his orphan grandchildren in his arms, Oh! my children, my children! he cried, have I found you thus? My poor Jack! art thou gone? I thought thou shouldst have carried thy father's gray gairs to the grave! and these little ones— his tears choked his utterance, and he fell again on the necks of the children.

My dear old man! said Harley, Providence has sent you to relieve them; it will bless me, if I can be the means of assisting you.—Yes, indeed sir, answered the boy; father, when he was a-dying, bade God bless us; and prayed, that if grandfather lived, he might send him to support us.——Where did they lay my boy? said Edwards. In the old church-yard, replied the woman, hard by his mother.—I will show it you, answered the boy: for I have wept over it many a time, when first I came amongst strange folks. He took the old man's hand: Harley laid hold of his sister's, and they walked in silence to the church-yard.

There was an old stone, with the corner broken off, and some letters, half covered with moss, to denote the names of the dead: there was a cyphered R. E. plainer than the rest: it was the tomb they sought. Here it is, grandfather, said the boy. Edwards gazed upon it without uttering a word: the girl, who had only sighed before, now wept outright: her brother sobbed, but he stifled his sobbing. I have told sister, said he, that she should not take it so to heart: she can knit already, and I shall soon be able to dig: we shall not starve, sister, indeed we shall not, nor shall grandfather neither.—The girl cried afresh; Harley kissed off her tears as they flowed, and wept between every kiss.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

He returns home.—A description of his retinue.

It was with some difficulty that Harley prevailed on the old man to leave the spot where the remains of his son were laid. At last, with the assistance of the school-mistress, he prevailed; and she accommodated Edwards and him with beds in her house, there being nothing like an inn nearer than the distance of some miles.

In the morning, Harley persuaded Edwards to come with the children to his house, which was distant but a short day's journey. The boy walked in his grandfather's hand: and the name of Edwards procured him a neighbouring farmer's horse, on which a servant mounted, with the girl on a pillow before him.

With this train, Harley returned to the abode of his fathers: and we cannot but think that his enjoyment was as great as if he had arrived from the tour of Europe, with a Swiss valet for his companion, and half a dozen snuff-boxes with invisible hinges in his pocket. But we take our ideas from sounds which folly has invented; Fashion, Bon ton, and Virtù, are the names of certain idols, to which we sacrifice the genuine pleasures of the soul: in this world of semblance, we are contented with personating happiness; to feel it is an art beyond us.

It was otherwise with Harley; he ran up stairs to his aunt, with the history of his fellow-travellers glowing on his lips. His aunt was an œconomist; but she knew the pleasure of doing charitable things, and withal was fond of her nephew, and solicitous to oblige him. She received old Edwards, therefore, w th a look of more complacency than is perhaps natural to maiden ladies of threescore, and was remarkably atten-

tive to his grandchildren: she roasted apples with her own hands for their supper, and made up a little bed beside her own for the girl. Edwards made some attempts towards an acknowledgement for these favours; but his young friend stopped them in their beginnings. 'Whosoever receiveth any of these children'—— said his aunt; for her acquaintance with her Bible was habitual.

Early next morning, Harley stole into the room where Edwards lay; he expected to have found him a-bed; but in this he was mistaken: the old man had risen, and was leaning over his sleeping grandson, with the tears flowing down his cheeks. At first he did not perceive Harley; when he did, he endeavoured to hide his grief, and, crossing his eyes with his hand, expressed his surprise at seeing him so early astir. I was thinking of you, said Harley, and your children: I learned last night that a small farm of mine in the neighbourhood is now vacant: if you will occupy it, I shall gain a good neighbour, and be able, in some measure, to repay the notice you took of me when a boy; and as the furniture of the house is mine, it will be so much trouble saved. Edwards's tears gushed afresh, and Harley led him to see the place he intended for him.

The house upon this farm was indeed little better than a hut; its situation, however, was pleasant; and Edwards, assisted by the beneficence of Harley, set about improving its neatness and convenience. He staked out a piece of the green before for a garden, and Peter, who acted in Harley's family as valet, butler, and gardener, had orders to furnish him with parcels of the different seeds he chose to sow in it. I have seen his master at work in this little spot, with his coat off, and his dibble in his hand: it was a scene of tranquil virtue to have stopped an angel on his errands of mercy! Harley had contrived to lead a little

bubbling brook through a green walk in the middle of the ground, upon which he had erected a mill in miniature for the diversion of Edwards's infant grandson, and made shift in its construction to introduce a pliant bit of wood, that answered with its fairy clack to the murmuring of the rill that turned it. I have seen him stand, listening to these mingled sounds, with his eye fixed on the boy, and the smile of conscious satisfaction on his cheek; while the old man, with a look half turned to Harley and half to Heaven, breathed an ejaculation of gratitude and piety.

Father of mercies! I also would thank thee! that not only hast thou assigned eternal rewards to virtue, but that, even in this bad world, the lines of our duty and our happiness are so frequently woven together.

A FRAGMENT.

The Man of Feeling talks of what he does not understand.—An incident.

**** Edwards, said he, I have a proper regard for the prosperity of my country; every native of it appropriates to himself some share of the power, or the fame, which, as a nation, it acquires; but I cannot throw off the man so much, as to rejoice at our conquests in India. You tell me of immense territories subject to the English: I cannot think of their possessions, without being led to inquire, by what right they possess them. They came there as traders, bartering the commodities they brought for others which their purchasers could spare; and however great their profits were, they were then equitable. But what title have the subjects of another kingdom to establish an empire in India? to give laws to a country where the inhabitants received them on the terms of friendly

commerce? You say they are happier under our regulations than the tyranny of their own petty princes. I must doubt it, from the conduct of those by whom these regulations have been made. They have drained the treasuries of nabobs, who must fill them by oppressing the industry of their subjects. Nor is this to be wondered at, when we consider the motive upon which those gentlemen do not deny their going to India. The fame of conquest, barbarous as that motive is, is but a secondary consideration: there are certain stations in wealth to which the warriors of the East aspire. It is there indeed where the wishes of their friends assign them eminence, where the question of their country is pointed at their return. When shall I see a commander return from India in the pride of honourable poverty?—You describe the victories they have gained; they are sullied by the cause in which they fought: you enumerate the spoils of those victories; they are covered with the blood of the vanquished!

Could you tell me of some conqueror giving peace and happiness to the conquered; did he accept the gifts of their princes to use them for the comfort of those whose fathers, sons, or husbands, fell in battle; did he use his power to gain security and freedom to the regions of oppression and slavery; did he endear the British name by examples of generosity, which the most barbarous or most depraved are rarely able to resist; did he return with the consciousness of duty discharged to his country, and humanity to his fellow-creatures; did he return with no lace on his coat, no slaves in his retinue, no chariot at his door, and no burgundy at his table;—these were laurels which princes might envy—which an honest man would not condemn!

Your maxims, Mr. Harley, are certainly right, said Edwards. I am not capable of arguing with you; but

I imagine there are great temptations in a great degree of riches, which it is no easy matter to resist: those a poor man like me cannot describe, because he never knew them; and perhaps I have reason to bless God that I never did; for then it is likely I should have withstood them no better than my neighbours. For you know, sir, that it is not the fashion now, as it was in former times, that I have read of in books, when your great generals died so poor, that they did not leave wherewithal to buy them a coffin; and people thought the better of their memories for it: if they did so now-a-days, I question if any body except yourself, and some few like you, would thank them.

I am sorry, replied Harley, that there is so much truth in what you say; but however the general current of opinion may point, the feelings are not yet lost that applaud benevolence, and censure inhumanity. Let us endeavour to strengthen them in ourselves; and we, who live sequestered from the noise of the multitude, have better opportunities of listening undisturbed to their voice.

They now approached the little dwelling of Edwards. A maid-servant, whom he had hired to assist him in the care of his grandchildren, met them a little way from the house: There is a young lady within with the children, said she. Edwards expressed his surprise at the visit: it was, however, not the less true; and we mean to account for it.

This young lady then was no other than Miss Walton. She had heard the old man's history from Harley, as we have already related it. Curiosity, or some other motive, made her desirous to see his grandchildren; this she had an opportunity of gratifying soon, the children, in some of their walks, having strolled as far as her father's avenue. She put several questions to both; she was delighted with the simplicity of their answers, and promised, that if they continued to be

good children, and do as their grandfather bid them, she would soon see them again, and bring some present or other for their reward. This promise she had performed now: she came attended only by a maid, and brought with her a complete suit of green for the boy, and a chintz gown, a cap, and a suit of ribands, for his sister. She had time enough, with her maid's assistance, to equip them in their new habiliments before Harley and Edwards returned. The boy heard his grandfather's voice, and, with that silent joy which his present finery inspired, ran to the door to meet him: putting one hand in his, with the other pointed to his sister, See, said he, what Miss Walton has brought us! —Edwards gazed on them. Harley fixed his eyes on Miss Walton; hers were turned to the ground;—in Edwards's was a beamy moisture.—He folded his hands together—I cannot speak, young lady, said he, to thank you. Neither could Harley. There were a thousand sentiments; but they gushed so impetuously on his heart, that he could not utter a syllable.* * * *

CHAPTER XL.

The Man of Feeling jealous.

The desire of communicating knowledge or intelligence, is an argument with those who hold that man is naturally a social animal. It is indeed one of the earliest propensities we discover; but it may be doubted whether the pleasure (for pleasure there certainly is) arising from it be not often more selfish than social: for we frequently observe the tidings of ill communicated as eagerly as the annunciation of good. Is it that we delight in observing the effects of the stronger passions? for we are all philosophers in this respect; and

it is perhaps amongst the spectators at Tyburn that the most genuine are to be found.

Was it from this motive that Peter came one morning into his master's room with a meaning face of recital? His master indeed did not at first observe it; for he was sitting with one shoe buckled, delineating portraits in the fire. I have brushed those clothes, sir, as you ordered me.—Harley nodded his head; but Peter observed that his hat wanted brushing too; his master nodded again. At last Peter bethought him, that the fire needed stirring; and, taking up the poker, demolished the turban'd head of a Saracen, while his master was seeking out a body for it. The morning is main cold, sir, said Peter. Is it? said Harley. Yes, sir; I have been as far as Tom Dowson's to fetch some barberries he had picked for Mrs. Margery. There was a rare junketing last night at Thomas's among Sir Harry Benson's servants; he lay at 'Squire Walton's, but he would not suffer his servants to trouble the family: so, to be sure, they were all at Tom's, and had a fiddle and a hot supper in the big room where the justices meet about the destroying of hares and partridges, and them things; and Tom's eyes looked so red and so bleared when I called him to get the barberries!—And I hear as how Sir Harry is going to be married to Miss Walton.——How! Miss Walton married! said Harley. Why it mayn't be true, sir, for all that; but Tom's wife told it me, and to be sure the servants told her, and their master told them, as I guess, sir; but it mayn't be true for all that, as I said before.—Have done with your idle information, said Harley: Is my aunt come down into the parlour to breakfast?—Yes, sir. Tell her I'll be with her immediately.

When Peter was gone, he stood with his eyes fixed on the ground, and the last words of his intelligence

vibrating in his ears. Miss Walton married! he sighed —and walked down stairs, with his shoe as it was, and the buckle in his hand. His aunt, however, was pretty well accustomed to those appearances of absence; besides that the natural gravity of her temper, which was commonly called into exertion by the care of her household concerns, was such as not easily to be discomposed by any circumstance of accidental impropriety. She too had been informed of the intended match between Sir Harry Benson and Miss Walton. I have been thinking, said she, that they are distant relations: for the great-grandfather of this Sir Harry Benson, who was knight of the shire in the reign of Charles the First, and one of the cavaliers of those times, was married to a daughter of the Walton family. Harley answered dryly, That it might be so; but that he never troubled himself about those matters. Indeed, said she, you are to blame, nephew, for not knowing a little more of them: before I was near your age, I had sewed the pedigree of our family in a set of chair-bottoms, that were made a present of to my grandmother, who was a very notable woman, and had a proper regard for gentility, I'll assure you; but now-a-days it is money, not birth, that makes people respected; the more shame for the times!

Harley was in no very good humour for entering into a discussion of this question; but he always entertained so much filial respect for his aunt, as to attend to her discourse.

We blame the pride of the rich, said he; but are not we ashamed of our poverty?

Why, one would not choose, replied his aunt, to make a much worse figure than one's neighbours; but, as I was saying before, the times (as my friend Mrs. Dorothy Walton observes) are shamefully degenerated in this sespect. There was but t'other day, at Mr. Walton's, that fat fellow's daughter, the London

merchant, as he calls himself, though I have heard that he was little better than the keeper of a chandler's shop:—we were leaving the gentlemen to go to tea. She had a hoop forsooth, as large and as stiff—and it showed a pair of bandy legs, as thick as two——I was nearer the door by an apron's length, and the pert hussy brushed by me, as who should say, Make way for your betters, and with one of her London bobs—but Mrs. Dorothy did not let her pass with it; for all the time of drinking tea, she spoke of the precedency of family, and the disparity there is between people who are come of something, and your mushroom-gentry who wear their coats of arms in their purses.

Her indignation was interrupted by the arrival of her maid with a damask table-cloth, and a set of napkins, from the loom, which had been spun by her mistress's own hand. There was the family-crest in each corner, and in the middle a view of the battle of Worcester, where one of her ancestors had been a captain in the king's forces; and with a sort of poetical license in perspective, there was seen the Royal Oak, with more wig than leaves upon it.

On all this the good lady was very copious, and took up the remaining intervals of filling tea, to describe its excellences to Harley; adding, that she intended this as a present for his wife when he should get one. He sighed and looked foolish, and, commending the serenity of the day, walked out into the garden.

He sat down on a little seat which commanded an extensive prospect round the house. He leaned on his hand, and scored the ground with his stick: Miss Walton married! said he; but what is that to me? May she be happy! her virtues deserve it; to me her marriage is otherwise indifferent: I had romantic dreams! they are fled!——it is perfectly indifferent.

Just at that moment he saw a servant, with a knot of ribands in his hat, go into the house. His cheeks

grew flushed at the sight. He kept his eye fixt for some time on the door by which he had entered; then starting to his feet, hastily followed him.

When he approached the door of the kitchen, where he supposed the man had entered, his heart throbbed so violently, that when he would have called Peter his voice failed in the attempt. He stood a moment listening in this breathless state of palpitation: Peter came out by chance. Did your honour want any thing?—Where is the servant that came just now from Mr. Walton's?——From Mr. Walton's, sir! there is none of his servants here, that I know of.—Nor of Sir Harry Benson's?—He did not wait for an answer; but having by this time observed the hat with its parti-coloured ornament hanging on a peg near the door, he pressed forwards into the kitchen, and, addressing himself to a stranger whom he saw there, asked him, with no small tremor in his voice, If he had any commands for him? The man looked silly, and said that he had nothing to trouble his honour with.—Are not you a servant of Sir Harry Benson's?—No, sir.—You 'll pardon me, young man; I judged by the favour in your hat.—Sir, I'm his majesty's servant, God bless him! and these favours we always wear when we are recruiting.——Recruiting! his eyes glistened at the word: he seized the soldier's hand, and, shaking it violently, ordered Peter to fetch a bottle of his aunt's best dram. The bottle was brought: You shall drink the king's health, said Harley, in a bumper.——The king and your honour.—Nay, you shall drink the king's health by itself; you may drink mine in another. Peter looked in his master's face, and filled with some little reluctance. Now to your mistress, said Harley: every soldier has a mistress. The man excused himself—To your mistress! you cannot refuse it. 'Twas Mrs. Margery's best dram! Peter stood with the bottle a little inclined,

but not so as to discharge a drop of its contents: Fill it, Peter, said his master, fill it to the brim. Peter filled it; and the soldier, having named Suky Simpson, dispatched it in a twinkling. Thou art an honest fellow, said Harley, and I love thee; and, shaking his hand again, desired Peter to make him his guest at dinner, and walked up into his room with a pace much quicker and more springy than usual.

This agreeable disappointment however he was not long suffered to enjoy. The curate happened that day to dine with him: his visits indeed were more properly to the aunt than the nephew; and many of the intelligent ladies in the parish, who, like some very great philosophers, have the happy knack at accounting for every thing, gave out, that there was a particular attachment between them, which wanted only to be matured by some more years of courtship to end in the tenderest connexion. In this conclusion indeed, supposing the premises to have been true, they were somewhat justified by the known opinion of the lady, who frequently declared herself a friend to the ceremonial of former times, when a lover might have sighed seven years at his mistress's feet, before he was allowed the liberty of kissing her hand. 'Tis true, Mrs. Margery was now about her grand climacteric: no matter; that is just the age when we expect to grow younger. But I verily believe there was nothing in the report: the curate's connexion was only that of a genealogist, for in that character he was no way inferior to Mrs. Margery herself. He dealt also in the present times, for he was a politician and a newsmonger.

He had hardly said grace after dinner, when he told Mrs. Margery that she might soon expect a pair of white gloves, as Sir Harry Benson, he was very well informed, was just going to be married to Miss Walton. Harley spilt the wine he was carrying to his mouth: he had time, however, to recollect himself

before the curate had finished the different particulars of his intelligence; and summing up all the heroism he was master of, filled a bumper, and drank to Miss Walton. With all my heart, said the curate, the bride that is to be. Harley would have said Bride too, but the word Bride stuck in his throat. His confusion, indeed, was manifest: but the curate began to enter on some point of descent with Mrs. Margery, and Harley had very soon after an opportunity of leaving them, while they were deeeply engaged in a question, whether the name of some great man in the time of Henry the Seventh was Richard or Humphrey.

He did not see his aunt again till supper: the time between he spent in walking, like some troubled ghost, round the place where his treasure lay. He went as far as a little gate, that led into a copse near Mr. Walton's house, to which that gentleman had been so obliging as to let him have a key. He had just begun to open it, when he saw, on a terrace below, Miss Walton walking with a gentleman in a riding-dress, whom he immediately guessed to be Sir Harry Benson. He stopped of a sudden; his hand shook so much that he could hardly turn the key; he opened the gate, however, and advanced a few paces. The lady's lap-dog pricked up his ears and barked; he stopped again—

> ————"the little dogs and all,
> Tray, Blanch, and Sweetheart, see they bark at me."

His resolution failed; he slunk back, and, locking the gate as softly as he could, stood on tiptoe looking over the wall till they were gone. At that instant a shepherd blew his horn: the romantic melancholy of the sound quite overcame him:—it was the very note that wanted to be touched—he sighed!—he dropped a tear!—and returned.

At supper his aunt observed that he was graver than

usual, but she did not suspect the cause: indeed, it may seem odd that she was the only person in the family who had no suspicion of his attachment to Miss Walton. It was frequently matter of discourse amongst the servants: perhaps her maiden-coldness—but for those things we need not account.

In a day or two he was so much master of himself as to be able to rhyme upon the subject. The following pastoral he left, some time after, on the handle of a tea-kettle, at a neighbouring house where we were visiting; and as I filled the tea-pot after him, I happened to put it in my pocket by a similar act of forgetfulness. It is such as might be expected from a man who makes verses for amusement. I am pleased with somewhat of good-nature that runs through it, because I have commonly observed the writers of those complaints to bestow epithets on their lost mistresses rather too harsh for the mere liberty of choice, which led them to prefer another to the poet himself: I do not doubt the vehemence of their passion; but, alas! the sensations of love are something more than the returns of gratitude.

LAVINIA,

A PASTORAL.

Why steals from my bosom the sigh?
  Why fixt is my gaze on the ground?
Come, give me my pipe, and I'll try
  To banish my cares with the sound.

Erewhile were its notes of accord
  With the smile of the flower-footed Muse;
Ah! why, by its master implor'd,
  Should it now the gay carol refuse?

'T was taught by Lavinia's smile
  In the mirth-loving chorus to join;
Ah, me! how unweeting the while!
  Lavinia—cannot be mine!

Another, more happy, the maid
By fortune is destin'd to bless——
Tho' the hope has forsook that betray'd,
Yet why should I love her the less?

Her beauties are bright as the morn,
With rapture I counted them o'er;
Such virtues these beauties adorn,
I knew her, and prais'd them no more.

I term'd her no goddess of love,
I call'd her not beauty divine:
These far other passions may prove,
But they could not be figures of mine.

It ne'er was apparel'd with art,
On words it could never rely;
It reign'd in the throb of my heart,
It spoke in the glance of my eye.

Oh fool! in the circle to shine
That Fashion's gay daughters approve,
You must speak as the fashions incline;—
Alas! are there fashions in love?

Yet sure they are simple who prize
The tongue that is smooth to deceive;
Yet sure she had sense to despise
The tinsel that folly may weave.

When I talk'd, I have seen her recline
With an aspect so pensively sweet,
Tho' I spoke what the shepherds opine,
A fop were ashamed to repeat.

She is soft as the dew-drops that fall
From the lip of the sweet-scented pea;
Perhaps when she smiled upon all,
I have thought that she smiled upon me.

But why of her charms should I tell?
Ah me! whom her charms have undone;
Yet I love the reflection too well,
The painful reflection to shun.

Ye souls of more delicate kind,
Who feast not on pleasure alone,
Who wear the soft sense of the mind,
To the sons of the world still unknown;

Ye know, tho' I cannot express,
Why I foolishly dote on my pain;
Nor will ye believe it the less
That I have not the skill to complain.

I lean on my hand with a sigh,
My friends the soft sadness condemn;
Yet, methinks, tho' I cannot tell why,
I should hate to be merry like them.

When I walk'd in the pride of the dawn,
Methought all the region look'd bright;
Has sweetness forsaken the lawn?
For, methinks, I grow sad at the sight.

When I stood by the stream, I have thought
There was mirth in the gurgling soft sound;
But now 'tis a sorrowful note,
And the banks are all gloomy around!

I have laugh'd at the jest of a friend;
Now they laugh and I know not the cause,
Tho' I seem with my looks to attend,
How silly! I ask what it was!

They sing the sweet song of the May,
They sing it with mirth and with glee;
Sure I once thought the sonnet was gay,
But now 't is all sadness to me.

Oh! give me the dubious light
That gleams thro' the quivering shade;
Oh! give me the horrors of night,
By gloom and by silence array'd!

Let me walk where the soft-rising wave
Has pictur'd the moon on its breast;
Let me walk where the new-cover'd grave
Allows the pale lover to rest!

When shall I in its peaceable womb
Be laid with my sorrows asleep!
Should Lavinia chance on my tomb—
I could die if I thought she would weep.

Perhaps, if the souls of the just
Revisit these mansions of care,
It may be my favourite trust
To watch o'er the fate of the fair;

Perhaps the soft thought of her breast
With rapture more favour'd to warm;
Perhaps, if with sorrow opprest,
Her sorrow with patience to arm.

Then! then! in the tenderest part
May I whisper, Poor Colin was true;
And mark if a heave of her heart
The thought of her Colin pursue,

THE PUPIL,

A FRAGMENT.

**** But as to the higher part of education, Mr. Harley, the culture of the mind;—let the feelings be awakened, let the heart be brought forth to its object, placed in the light in which nature would have it stand, and its decisions will ever be just. The world

"Will smile, and smile, and be a villain;"

and the youth who does not suspect its deceit will be content to smile with it.—His teachers will put on the most forbidding aspect in nature, and tell him of the beauty of virtue.

I have not, under these gray hairs, forgotten that I was once a young man warm in the pursuit of pleasure, but meaning to be honest as well as happy. I had ideas of virtue, of honour, of benevolence, which I had never been at the pains to define; but I felt my bosom heave at the thoughts of them, and I made the most delightful soliloquies.——It is impossible, said I, that there can be half so many rogues as are imagined.

I travelled, because it is the fashion for young men of my fortune to travel: I had a travelling tutor, which is the fashion too: but my tutor was a gentleman, which it is not always the fashion for tutors to be. His

gentility indeed was all he had from his father, whose prodigality had not left him a shilling to support it.

I have a favour to ask of you, my dear Mountford, said my father, which I will not be refused: You have travelled as became a man; neither France nor Italy has made any thing of Mountford, which Mountford before he left England would have been ashamed of: My son Edward goes abroad, would you take him under your protection?—He blushed—my father's face was scarlet—he pressed his hand to his bosom, as if he had said,—My heart does not mean to offend you. Mountford sighed twice——I am a proud fool, said he, and you will pardon it;—there! (he sighed again) I can hear of dependence, since it is dependence on my Sedley.——Dependence! answered my father; there can be no such word between us: what is there in 9000*l.* a year that should make me unworthy of Mountford's friendship?—They embraced; and soon after I set out on my travels, with Mountford for my guardian.

We were at Milan, where my father happened to have an Italian friend, to whom he had been of some service in England. The count, for he was of quality, was solicitous to return the obligation by a particular attention to his son: we lived in his palace, visited with his family, were caressed by his friends; and I began to be so well pleased with my entertainment, that I thought of England as of some foreign country.

The count had a son not much older than myself. At that age a friend is an easy acquisition: we were friends the first night of our acquaintance.

He introduced me into the company of a set of young gentlemen, whose fortunes gave them the command of pleasure, and whose inclinations incited them to the purchase. After having spent some joyous evenings in their society, it became a sort of habit

which I could not miss without uneasiness; and our meetings, which before were frequent, were now stated and regular.

Sometimes, in the pauses of our mirth, gaming was introduced as an amusement: it was an art in which I was a novice: I received instruction, as other novices do, by losing pretty largely to my teachers. Nor was this the only evil which Mountford foresaw would arise from the connexion I had formed; but a lecture of sour injunctions was not his method of reclaiming. He sometimes asked me questions about the company: but they were such as the curiosity of any indifferent man might have prompted: I told him of their wit, their eloquence, their warmth of friendship, and their sensibility of heart: And their honour, said I, laying my hand on my breast, is unquestionable. Mountford seemed to rejoice at my good fortune, and begged that I would introduce him to their acquaintance. At the next meeting I introduced him accordingly.

The conversation was as animated as usual; they displayed all that sprightliness and good-humour which my praises had led Mountford to expect; subjects too of sentiment occurred, and their speeches, particularly those of our friend the son of Count Respino, glowed with the warmth of honour, and softened into the tenderness of feeling. Mountford was charmed with his companions; when we parted, he made the highest eulogiums upon them: When shall we see them again? said he. I was delighted with the demand, and promised to reconduct him on the morrow.

In going to their place of rendezvous, he took me a little out of the road, to see, as he told me, the performances of a young statuary. When we were near the house in which Mountford said he lived, a boy of about seven years old crossed us in the street. At sight of Mountford he stopped, and, grasping his hand, My

dearest sir, said he, my father is likely to do well: he will live to pray for you, and to bless you: yes, he will bless you, though you are an Englishman, and some other hard word that the monk talked of this morning, which I have forgot, but it meant that you should not go to heaven; But he shall go to heaven, said I, for he has saved my father: come and see him, sir, that we may be happy.—My dear, I am engaged at present with this gentleman.—But he shall come along with you; he is an Englishman too, I fancy; he shall come and learn how an Englishman may go to heaven.—Mountford smiled, and we followed the boy together.

After crossing the next street, we arrived at the gate of a prison. I seemed surprised at the sight; our little conductor observed it. Are you afraid, sir? said he. I was afraid once too, but my father and mother are here, and I am never afraid when I am with them. He took my hand, and led me through a dark passage that fronted the gate. When we came to a little door at the end, he tapped; a boy, still younger than himself, opened it to receive us. Mountford entered with a look in which was pictured the benign assurance of a superior being. I followed in silence and amazement.

On something like a bed, lay a man, with a face seemingly emaciated with sickness, and a look of patient dejection; a bundle of dirty shreds served him for a pillow; but he had a better support—the arm of a female who kneeled beside him, beautiful as an angel, but with a fading languor in her countenance, the still-life of melancholy, that seemed to borrow its shade from the object on which she gazed. There was a tear in her eye!—the sick man kissed it off in its bud, smiling through the dimness of his own!—When she saw Mountford, she crawled forward on the ground, and clasped his knees; he raised her from the floor;

she threw her arms round his neck, and sobbed out a speech of thankfulness, eloquent beyond the power of language.

Compose yourself, my love, said the man on the bed; but he whose goodness has caused that emotion will pardon its effects.—How is this, Mountford? said I; what do I see? what must I do?—You see, replied the stranger, a wretch sunk in poverty, starving in prison, stretched on a sick bed! But that is little:—there are his wife and children, wanting the bread which he has not to give them! Yet you cannot easily imagine the conscious serenity of his mind; in the gripe of affliction, his heart swells with the pride of virtue! it can even look down with pity on the man whose cruelty has wrung it almost to bursting. You are, I fancy, a friend of Mr. Mountford's: come nearer, and I'll tell you; for, short as my story is, I can hardly command breath enough for a recital. The son of Count Respino (I started as if I had trod on a viper) has long had a criminal passion for my wife; this her prudence had concealed from me; but he had lately the boldness to declare it to myself. He promised me affluence in exchange for honour, and threatened misery, as its attendant, if I kept it. I treated him with the contempt he deserved: the consequence was, that he hired a couple of bravoes (for I am persuaded they acted under his direction) who attempted to assassinate me in the street; but I made such a defence as obliged them to fly, after having given me two or three stabs, none of which however were mortal. But his revenge was not thus to be disappointed; in the little dealings of my trade I had contracted some debts, of which he had made himself master for my ruin; I was confined here at his suit, when not yet recovered from the wounds I had received; the dear woman and these two boys followed me, that we might starve together; but Providence interposed, and sent Mr. Mountford

to our support: he has relieved my family from the gnawings of hunger, and rescued me from death, to which a fever, consequent on my wounds, and increased by the want of every necessary, had almost reduced me.

Inhuman villain! I exclaimed, lifting up my eyes to Heaven. Inhuman indeed! said the lovely woman who stood at my side: Alas! sir, what had we done to offend him? what had these little ones done, that they should perish in the toils of his vengeance?—I reached a pen which stood in the inkstandish at the bed-side—May I ask what is the amount of the sum for which you are imprisoned?—I was able, he replied, to pay all but 500 crowns. I wrote a draft on the banker with whom I had a credit from my father, for 2500, and presenting it to the stranger's wife—You will receive, madam, on presenting this note, a sum more than sufficient for your husband's discharge; the remainder I leave for his industry to improve. I would have left the room: each of them laid hold of one of my hands; the children clung to my coat:—Oh! Mr. Harley, methinks I feel their gentle violence at this moment; it beats here with delight inexpressible! —Stay, sir, said he, I do not mean attempting to thank you (he took a pocket-book from under his pillow); let me but know what name I shall place here next to Mr. Mountford?—Sedley—He writ it down—An Englishman, too, I presume.—He shall go to heaven notwithstanding, said the boy who had been our guide. It began to be too much for me; I squeezed his hand that was clasped in mine; his wife's I pressed to my lips, and burst from the place, to give vent to the feelings that laboured within me. Oh! Mountford! said I, when he had overtaken me at the door. It is time, replied he, that we should think of our appointment; young Respino and his friends are waiting us.—Damn him, damn him! said I; let us leave Milan

instantly. But soft—I will be calm; Mountford, your pencil. I wrote on a slip of paper

"TO SIGNOR RESPINO.

"When you receive this, I am at a distance from Milan. Accept of my thanks for the civilities I have received from you and your family. As to the friendship with which you were pleased to honour me, the prison, which I have just left, has exhibited a scene to cancel it for ever. You may possibly be merry with your companions at my weakness, as I suppose you will term it. I give you leave for derision: you may affect a triumph; I shall feel it.

"EDWARD SEDLEY."

You may send this if you will, said Mountford coolly; but still Respino is *a man of honour!* the world will continue to call him so.—It is probable, I answered, they may; I envy not the appellation. If this is the world's honour, if these men are the guides of its manners——Tut! said Mountford, do you eat macaroni?——

* * * * * * * * * *

[At this place had the greatest depredations of the curate begun. There were so few connected passages of the subsequent chapters remaining, that even the partiality of an Editor could not offer them to the Public. I discovered from some scattered sentences, that they were of much the same tenor with the preceding; recitals of little adventures, in which the dispositions of a man, sensible to judge, and still more warm to feel, had room to unfold themselves. Some instruction, and some example, I make no doubt they contained; but it is likely that many of those, whom chance has led to a perusal of what I have already presented, may have read it with little pleasure, and will feel no disappointment from the want of those

parts which I have been unable to procure: to such as may have expected the intricacies of a novel, a few incidents in a life undistinguished, except by some features of the heart, cannot have afforded much entertainment.

Harley's own story, from the mutilated passages I have mentioned, as well as from some inquiries I was at the trouble of making in the country, I found to have been simple to excess. His mistress, I could perceive, was not married to Sir Harry Benson: but it would seem, by one of the following chapters, which is still entire, that Harley had not profited on the occasion by making any declaration of his own passion, after those of the other had been unsuccessful. The state of his health, for some part of this period, appears to have been such as to forbid any thoughts of that kind: he had been seized with a very dangerous fever, caught by attending old Edwards in one of an infectious kind. From this he had recovered but imperfectly; and though he had no formed complaint, his health was manifestly on the decline.

It appears that the sagacity of some friend had at length pointed out to his aunt a cause from which this might be supposed to proceed, to wit, his hopeless love for Miss Walton; for, according to the conceptions of the world, the love of a man of Harley's fortune for the heiress of 4000*l.* a year is indeed desperate. Whether it was so in this case may be gathered from the next chapter, which, with the two subsequent, concluding the performance, have escaped those accidents that proved fatal to the rest.]

CHAPTER LV.

He sees Miss Walton, and is happy.

HARLEY was one of those few friends, whom the malevolence of fortune had yet left me; I could not therefore but be sensibly concerned for his present indisposition; there seldom passed a day on which I did not make inquiry about him.

The physician who attended him had informed me the evening before, that he thought him considerably better than he had been for some time past. I called next morning to be confirmed in a piece of intelligence so welcome to me.

When I entered his apartment, I found him sitting on a couch, leaning on his hand, with his eye turned upwards in the attitude of thoughtful inspiration. His look had always an open benignity which commanded esteem; there was now something more——a gentle triumph in it.

He rose, and met me with his usual kindness. When I gave him the good accounts I had had from his physician,—I am foolish enough, said he, to rely but little, in this instance, upon physic: my presentiment may be false; but I think I feel myself approaching to my end, by steps so easy, that they woo me to approach it.

There is a certain dignity in retiring from life at a time when the infirmities of age have not sapped our faculties. This world, my dear Charles, was a scene in which I never much delighted. I was not formed for the bustle of the busy, nor the dissipation of the gay; a thousand things occurred, where I blushed for the impropriety of my conduct when I thought on the world, though my reason told me I should have blushed to have done otherwise. It was a scene of dissimu-

lation, of restraint, of disappointment. I leave it to enter on that state, which I have learned to believe is replete with the genuine happiness attendant upon virtue. I look back on the tenor of my life, with the consciousness of few great offences to account for. There are blemishes, I confess, which deform in some degree the picture; but I know the benignity of the Supreme Being, and rejoice at the thoughts of its exertion in my favour. My mind expands at the thought I shall enter into the society of the blessed, wise as angels, with the simplicity of children. He had by this time clasped my hand, and found it wet by a tear which had just fallen upon it.—His eye began to moisten too—we sat for some time silent. At last, with an attempt to a look of more composure—There are some remembrances, said Harley, which rise involuntarily on my heart, and make me almost wish to live. I have been blessed with a few friends, who redeem my opinion of mankind. I recollect, with the tenderest emotion, the scenes of pleasure I have passed among them; but we shall meet again, my friend, never to be separated. There are some feelings which perhaps are too tender to be suffered by the world. The world is in general selfish, interested, and unthinking, and throws the imputation of romance or melancholy on every temper more susceptible than its own. I cannot think but in those regions which I contemplate, if there is any thing of mortality left about us, that these feelings will subsist; they are called—perhaps they are—weaknesses here; but there may be some better modifications of them in heaven, which may deserve the name of virtues. He sighed as he spoke these last words. He had scarcely finished them when the door opened, and his aunt appeared leading in Miss Walton. My dear, says she, here is Miss Walton, who has been so kind as to come and inquire for you herself. I could observe a transient

glow upon his face. He rose from his seat. If to know Miss Walton's goodness, said he, be a title to deserve it, I have some claim. She begged him to resume his seat, and placed herself on the sofa beside him. I took my leave. Mrs. Margery accompanied me to the door. He was left with Miss Walton alone. She inquired anxiously about his health. I believe, said he, from the accounts which my physicians unwillingly give me, that they have no great hopes of my recovery. She started as he spoke; but, recollecting herself immediately, endeavoured to flatter him into a belief that his apprehensions were groundless. I know, said he, that it is usual with persons at my time of life to have these hopes, which your kindness suggests: but I would not wish to be deceived. To meet death as becomes a man is a privilege bestowed on few.—I would endeavour to make it mine; nor do I think that I can ever be better prepared for it than now: it is that chiefly which determines the fitness of its approach.

Those sentiments, answered Miss Walton, are just; but your good sense, Mr. Harley, will own, that life has its proper value. As the province of virtue, life is ennobled; as such, it is to be desired. To virtue has the Supreme Director of all things assigned rewards enough even here to fix its attachment.

The subject began to overpower her.—Harley lifted his eyes from the ground.—There are, said he in a very low voice, there are attachments, Miss Walton—His glance met hers.—They both betrayed a confusion, and were both instantly withdrawn.—He paused some moments.—I am in such a state as calls for sincerity, let that also excuse it.—It is perhaps the last time we shall ever meet. I feel something particularly solemn in the acknowledgement; yet my heart swells to make it, awed as it is by a sense of my presumption, by a sense of your perfections.—He paused

again.—Let it not offend you, to know their power over one so unworthy.—It will, I believe, soon cease to beat, even with that feeling which it shall lose the latest.—To love Miss Walton could not be a crime;—if to declare it is one, the expiation will be made.—Her tears were now flowing without control.—Let me entreat you, said she, to have better hopes—Let not life be so indifferent to you; if my wishes can put any value on it—I will not pretend to misunderstand you—I know your worth—I have known it long—I have esteemed it—What would you have me say?—I have loved it as it deserved.—He seized her hand—a languid colour reddened his cheek—a smile brightened faintly in his eye. As he gazed on her it grew dim, it fixed, it closed—He sighed, and fell back on his seat—Miss Walton screamed at the sight—His aunt and the servants rushed into the room—They found them lying motionless together.—His physician happened to call at that instant. Every art was tried to recover them—With Miss Walton they succeeded—but Harley was gone for ever!

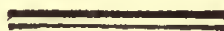
CHAPTER LVI.

The emotions of the heart.

I ENTERED the room where his body lay; I approached it with reverence, not fear: I looked; the recollection of the past crowded upon me. I saw that form which, but a little before, was animated with a soul which did honour to humanity, stretched without sense or feeling before me. 'Tis a connexion we cannot easily forget: I took his hand in mine; I repeated his name involuntarily; I felt a pulse in every vein at the sound. I looked earnestly in his face; his eye was closed, his lip pale and motionless. There is an

enthusiasm in sorrow that forgets impossibility; I wondered that it was so. The sight drew a prayer from my heart: it was the voice of frailty and of man! the confusion of my mind began to subside into thought; I had time to weep!

I turned with the last farewell upon my lips, when I observed old Edwards standing behind me. I looked him full in the face, but his eye was fixed on another object. He pressed between me and the bed, and stood gazing on the breathless remains of his benefactor. I spoke to him, I know not what; but he took no notice of what I said, and remained in the same attitude as before. He stood some minutes in that posture, then turned and walked towards the door. He paused as he went; he returned a second time; I could observe his lips move as he looked: but the voice they would have uttered was lost. He attempted going again: and a third time he returned as before. I saw him wipe his cheek; then, covering his face with his hands, his breast heaving with the most convulsive throbs, he flung out of the room.



THE CONCLUSION.

He had hinted that he should like to be buried in a certain spot near the grave of his mother. This is a weakness; but it is universally incident to humanity: it is at least a memorial for those who survive: for some, indeed, a slender memorial will serve; and the soft affections, when they are busy that way, will build their structures, were it but on the paring of a nail.

He was buried in the place he had desired. It was shaded by an old tree, the only one in the churchyard,

in which was a cavity worn by time. I have sat with him in it, and counted the tombs. The last time we passed there, methought he looked wistfully on the tree: there was a branch of it that bent towards us, waving in the wind; he waved his hand, as if he mimicked its motion. There was something predictive in his look! perhaps it is foolish to remark it, but there are times and places when I am a child at those things.

I sometimes visit his grave; I sit in the hollow of the tree. It is worth a thousand homilies; every noble feeling rises within me! every beat of my heart awakens a virtue!—but it will make you hate the world—No: there is such an air of gentleness around, that I can hate nothing; but, as to the world—I pity the men of it.

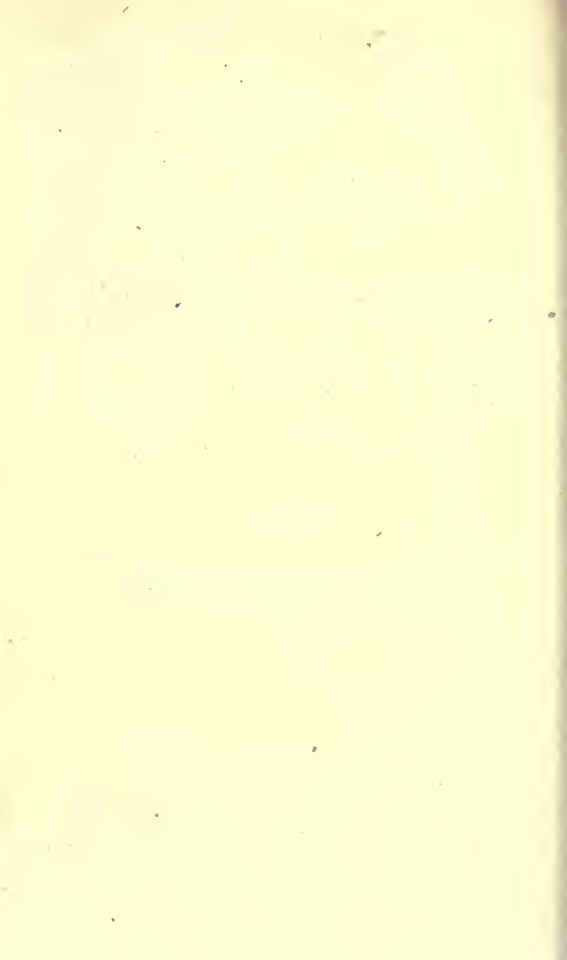
END OF THE MAN OF FEELING.

JULIA DE ROUBIGNÉ,

A TALE.

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE MAN OF FEELING," AND "THE MAN OF THE WORLD."



INTRODUCTION.

I HAVE formerly taken the liberty of holding some prefatory discourse with my readers, on the subject of those little histories which accident enabled me to lay before them. This is probably the last time I shall make use of their indulgence; and even, if this Introduction should be found superfluous, it may claim their pardon, as the parting address of one, who has endeavoured to contribute to their entertainment.

I was favoured last summer with a visit from a gentleman, a native of France, with whose father I had been intimately acquainted when I was last in that country. I confess myself particularly delighted with an intercourse, which removes the barrier of national distinction, and gives to the inhabitants of the world the appearance of one common family. I received, therefore, this young Frenchman into that humble shed, which Providence has allowed my age to rest in, with peculiar satisfaction; and was rewarded, for any little attention I had in my power to show him, by acquiring the friendship of one, whom I found to inherit all that paternal worth which had fixed my esteem, about a dozen years ago, in Paris. In truth, such attention

always rewards itself; and, I believe, my own feelings, which I expressed to this amiable and accomplished Frenchman on his leaving England, are such as every one will own, whose mind is susceptible of feeling at all. He was profuse of thanks, to which my good offices had no title, but from the inclination that accompanied them.—*Ici, Monsieur,* (said I, for he had used a language more accommodated than ours to the lesser order of sentiments, and I answered him, as well as long want of practice would allow me, in the same tongue,)—*Ici, Monsieur, obscur et inconnu, avec beaucoup de bienveillance, mais peu de pouvoir, je ne goûte pas d'un plaisir plus sincère, que de penser, qu'il y a, dans aucun coin du monde, un cœur honnête qui se souvient de moi avec reconnoissance.*

But I am talking of myself, when I should be giving an account of the following papers. This gentleman, discoursing with me on the subject of those letters, the substance of which I formerly published under the title of 'The Man of the World,' observed, that if the desire of searching into the records of private life were common, the discovery of such collections would cease to be wondered at. "We look (said he) for the histories of men, among those of high rank; but memoirs of sentiment and suffering may be found in every condition.

"My father (continued my young friend) made, since you saw him, an acquisition of that nature, by a whimsical accident. Standing one day at the door of a grocery-shop, making inquiry as to the lodgings of

some person of his acquaintance, a little boy passed him, with a bundle of papers in his hand, which he offered for sale to the master of the shop, for the ordinary uses of his trade; but they differed about the price, and the boy was ready to depart, when my father desired a sight of the papers, saying to the lad, with a smile, that, perhaps, he might deal with him for his book. Upon reading a sentence or two, he found a style much above that of the ordinary manuscripts of a grocery-shop, and gave the boy his price, at a venture, for the whole. When he had got home, and examined the parcel, he discovered it to consist of letters put up, for the most part, according to their dates, which he committed to me, as having, he said, better eyes, and a keener curiosity, than his. I found them to contain a story in detail, which, I believe, would interest one of your turn of thinking a good deal. If you choose to undergo the trouble of the perusal, I shall take care to have them sent over to you by the first opportunity I can find, and if you will do the public the favour to digest them, as you did those of Annesly and his children"—My young Frenchman speaks the language of compliment; but I do not choose to translate any further. It is enough to say, that I received his papers some time ago, and that they are those which I have translated, and now give to the world. I had, perhaps, treated them as I did the letters he mentioned; but I found it a difficult task to reduce them into narrative, because they are made up of sentiment, which narrative would destroy. The only power I have ex-

ercised over them, is that of omitting letters, and passages of letters, which seem to bear no relation to the story I mean to communicate. In doing this, however, I confess I have been cautious: I love, myself, (and am apt, therefore, from a common sort of weakness, to imagine that other people love,) to read nature in her smallest character, and am often more apprised of the state of the mind, from very trifling, than from very important circumstances.

As, from age and situation, it is likely I shall address the public no more, I cannot avoid taking this opportunity of thanking it for the reception it has given to those humble pages which I formerly introduced to its notice. Unknown and unpatronized, I had little pretension to its favour, and little expectation of it; writing, or arranging the writings of others, was, to me, only a favourite amusement, for which a man easily finds both time and apology. One advantage I drew from it, which the humane may hear with satisfaction; I often wandered from my own woe, in tracing the tale of another's affliction, and, at this moment, every sentence I write, I am but escaping a little further from the pressure of sorrow.

Of the merit or faults of the composition, in the volumes of which I have directed the publication, a small share only was mine; for their tendency I hold myself entirely accountable, because, had it been a bad one, I had the power of suppressing them; and from their tendency, I believe, more than any other

quality belonging to them, has the indulgence of their readers arisen. For that indulgence I desire to return them my grateful acknowledgements as an editor; I shall be proud with better reason, if there is nothing to be found in my publications, that may forfeit their esteem as a man.

JULIA DE ROUBIGNÉ,

A TALE.

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS.

LETTER I.

Julia de Roubigné to Maria de Roncilles.

"THE friendship of your Maria misfortune can never deprive you of."—These were the words with which you sealed that attachment we had formed in the blissful period of infancy. The remembrance of those peaceful days we passed together in the convent, is often recalled to my mind, amidst the cares of the present. Yet do not think me foolish enough to complain of the want of those pleasures which affluence gave us; the situation of my father's affairs is such as to exclude luxury, but it allows happiness: and, were it not for the recollection of what he once possessed, which now and then intrudes itself upon him, he could scarce form a wish that were not gratified in the retreat he has found.

You were wont to call me the little philosopher: if it be philosophy to feel no violent distress from that change which the ill-fortune of our family has made in its circumstances, I do not claim much merit from being that way a philosopher. From my earliest days I found myself unambitious of wealth or grandeur, contented with the enjoyment of sequestered life, and fearful of the dangers which attend an exalted station.

It is therefore more properly a weakness, than a virtue, in me, to be satisfied with my present situation.

But, after all, my friend, what is it we have lost? We have exchanged the life of gaiety, of tumults, of pleasure they call it, which we led in Paris, when my father was a rich man; for the pure, the peaceful, the truly happy scenes, which this place affords us, now he is a poor one. Dependence and poverty alone are suffered to complain; but they know not how often greatness is dependent, and wealth is poor. Formerly, even during the very short space of the year we were at Belville, it was vain to think of that domestic enjoyment I used to hope for in the country; we were people of too much consequence to be allowed the privilege of retirement, and except those luxurious walks I sometimes found means to take—with you, my dear, I mean—the day was as little my own, as in the midst of our winter-hurry in town.

The loss of this momentous lawsuit has brought us down to the level of tranquillity. Our days are not now preoccupied by numberless engagements, nor our time anxiously divided for a rotation of amusements; I can walk, read or think, without the officious interruption of polite visitors; and, instead of talking eternally of others, I find time to settle accounts with myself.

Could we but prevail on my father to think thus!—Alas! his mind is not formed for contracting into that narrow sphere, which his fortune has now marked out for him. He feels adversity a defeat, to which the vanquished submit, with pride in their looks, but anguish in their hearts. He is cut off from the enjoyment of his present state, while he puts himself under the cruel necessity of dissembling his regret for the loss of the former.

I can easily perceive how much my dearest mother is affected by this. I see her constantly on the watch

for every word and look that may discover his feelings; and she has, too often, occasion to observe them unfavourable. She endeavours, and commonly succeeds in her endeavour, to put on the appearance of cheerfulness; she even tries to persuade herself that she has reason to be contented; but, alas! an effort to be happy, is always but an increase of our uneasiness.

And what is left for your Julia to do? In truth, I fear, I am of little service. My heart is too much interested in the scene, to allow me that command over myself which would make me useful. My father often remarks, that I look grave; I smile (foolishly, I fear), and deny it: it is, I believe, no more than I used to do formerly; but we were then in a situation that did not lead him to observe it. He had no consciousness in himself, to prompt the observation.

How often do I wish for you, Maria, to assist me! There is something in that smile of yours, (I paint it to myself at this instant,) which care and sorrow are unable to withstand; besides the general effect produced by the intervention of a third person, in a society the members of which are afraid to think of one another's thoughts.—Yet you need not answer this wish of mine; I know how impossible it is for you to come hither at present. Write to me as often as you can; you will not expect order in my letters, nor observe it in your answers; I will speak to you on paper when my heart is full, and you will answer me from the sympathy of yours.

LETTER II.

Julia to Maria.

I am to vex my Maria with an account of trifles, and those too unpleasant ones; but she has taught me to

think, that nothing is insignificant to her, in which I am concerned, and insists on participating, at least, if she cannot alleviate, my distresses.

I am every day more and more uneasy about the chagrin which our situation seems to give my father. A little incident has just now plunged him into a fit of melancholy, which all the attention of my mother, all the attempts at gaiety which your poor Julia is constrained to make, cannot dissipate or overcome.

Our old servant Le Blanc is your acquaintance; indeed he very soon becomes acquainted with every friend and visitor of the family, his age prompting him to talk, and giving him the privilege of talking.

Le Blanc had obtained permission, a few days since, to go on a visit to his daughter, who is married to a young fellow serving in the capacity of coachman at a gentleman's in the neighbourhood of Belville. He returned last night, and, in his usual familiar manner, gave us an account of his expedition this morning.

My father inquired after his daughter; he gave some short answer as to her; but I saw by his face that he was full of some other intelligence. He was standing behind my father, resting one hand on the back of his chair; he began to rub it violently, as if he would have given the wood a polish by the friction. I was at Belville, sir, said he. My father made no reply; but Le Blanc had got over the difficulty of beginning, and was too much occupied by the idea of the scene, to forbear attempting the picture.

When I struck off the high-road, said he, to go down by the old avenue, I thought I had lost my way; there was not a tree to be seen. You may believe me as you please, sir; but, I declare, I saw the rooks, that used to build here, in a great flock over my head, croaking for all the world as if they had been looking for the avenue too. Old Lasune's house, where you, miss, (turning to me,) would frequently stop in your

walks, was pulled down, except a single beam at one end, which now serves for a rubbing-post to some cattle that graze there; and your roan horse, sir, which the marquis had of you in a present, when he purchased Belville, had been turned out to grass among the rest, it seems; for there he was, standing under the shade of the wall; and when I came up, the poor beast knew me, as any Christian would, and came neighing up to my side as he was wont to do. I gave him a piece of bread I had put in my pocket in the morning, and he followed me for more, till I reached the very gate of the house; I mean what was the gate, when I knew it; for there is now a rail run across, with a small door, which Le Sauvre told me they call Chinese. But, after all, the marquis is seldom there to enjoy those fine things; he lives in town, Le Sauvre says, eleven months in the year, and only comes down to Belville, for a few weeks, to get money to spend in Paris.

Here Le Blanc paused in his narration. I was afraid to look up to see its effect on my father; indeed the picture which the poor fellow had, innocently, drawn, had too much affected myself.—Lasune's house!—My Maria remembers it; but she knows not all the ties which its recollection has upon me.

I stole however a side-long glance at my father. He seemed affected, but disdain was mixed with his tenderness; he gathered up his features, as it were, to hide the effect of the recital. You saw Le Sauvre then? said he coolly.—Yes, answered Le Blanc; but he is wonderfully altered since he was in your service, sir; when I first discovered him, he was in the garden, picking some greens for his dinner; he looked so rueful when he lifted up his head and saw me! indeed I was little better myself, when I cast my eyes around. It was a sad sight to see! for the marquis keeps no gardener, except Le Sauvre himself, who has fifty

things to do besides, and only hires another hand or two, for the time he resides at Belville in the summer. The walks that used to be trimmed so nicely, are covered with mole-hills; the hedges are full of great holes, and Le Sauvre's chickens were basking in the flower-beds. He took me into the house, and his wife seemed glad to see her old acquaintance, and the children clambered up to kiss me, and Jeanot asked me about his godmother, meaning you, madam; and his little sister inquired after her handsome mistress, as she used to call you, miss. I have got, said Nanette, two new mistresses, that are finer dressed than she, but they are much prouder, and not half so pretty; meaning two of the marquis's daughters, who were at Belville for a few days, when their father was last there. I smiled to hear the girl talk so, though, Heaven knows, my heart was sad. Only three of the rooms are furnished, in one of which Le Sauvre and his family were sitting; the rest had their windows darkened with cobwebs, and they echoed so when Le Sauvre and I walked through them, that I shuddered, as if I had been in a monument.

It is enough, Le Blanc, said my mother, in a sort of whisper. My father asked some indifferent question about the weather. I sat, I know not how, looking piteously, I suppose; for my mother tapped my cheek with the word Child! emphatically pronounced. I started out of my reverie, and, finding myself unable to feign a composure which I did not feel, walked out of the room to hide my emotion. When I got to my own chamber, I felt the full force of Le Blanc's description, but to me it was not painful: it is not on hearts that yield the soonest that sorrow has the most powerful effects; it was but giving way to a shower of tears, and I could think of Belville with pleasure, even in the possession of another.—They may cut its trees, Maria, and alter its walks, but cannot so deface

it as to leave no traces for the memory of your Julia: ——Methinks I should hate to have been born in a town; when I say my native brook, or my native hill, I talk of friends of whom the remembrance warms my heart. To me, even to me, who have lost their acquaintance, there is something delightful in the melancholy recollection of their beauties; and, here, I often wander out to the top of a little broom-covered knoll, merely to look towards the quarter where Belville is situated.

It is otherwise with my father. On Le Blanc's recital he has brooded these three days. The effect it had on him is still visible in his countenance; and but an hour ago, while my mother and I were talking of some other subject, in which he was joining by monosyllables, he said, all at once, that he had some thoughts of sending to the marquis for his roan horse again, since he did not choose to keep him properly.

They who have never known prosperity, can hardly be said to be unhappy; it is from the remembrance of joys we have lost, that the arrows of affliction are pointed. Must we then tremble, my friend, in the possession of present pleasures, from the fear of their embittering futurity? or does Heaven thus teach us that sort of enjoyment, of which the remembrance is immortal? Does it point out those as the happy who can look back on their past life, not as the chronicle of pleasure, but as the record of virtue?

Forgive my preaching; I have leisure and cause to preach. You know how faithfully, in every situation,

I am yours.

LETTER III.

Julia to Maria.

"I WILL speak to you on paper when my heart is full." —Misfortune thinks itself entitled to speak, and feels some consolation in the privilege of complaining, even where it has nothing to hope from the utterance of complaint.

Is it a want of duty in me to mention the weakness of a parent? Heaven knows the sincerity of the love I bear him! Were I indifferent about my father, the state of his mind would not much disquiet me; but my anxiety for his happiness carries me perhaps a blameable length, in that censure, which I cannot help feeling, of his incapacity to enjoy it.

My mother too! if he knew how much it preys upon her gentle soul, to see the impatience with which he suffers adversity!—Yet, alas! unthinking creature that I am, I judge of his mind by my own, and while I venture to blame his distress, I forget that it is entitled to my pity.

This morning he was obliged to go to the neighbouring village, to meet a procureur from Paris on some business, which he told us would detain him all day. The night was cold and stormy, and my mother and I looked often earnestly out, thinking on the disagreeable ride he would have on his return. My poor husband! said my mother, as the wind howled in the lobby beneath. But I have heard him say, mamma, that, in these little hardships, a man thinks himself unfortunate, but is never unhappy; and, you may remember he would always prefer riding, to being driven in a carriage, because of the enjoyment which he told us he should feel from a clean room and a cheerful fire when he got home. At the word *carriage*, I could observe

my mother sigh; I was sorry it had escaped me; but at the end of my speech, we looked both of us at the hearth, which I had swept but the moment before; the faggots were crackling in the fire, and my little Fidele lay asleep before it.—He pricked up his ears and barked, and we heard the trampling of horses in the court. Your father is returned, cried my mother; and I ran to the door to receive him. Julia, is it not? said he (for the servant had not time to fetch us a light); but he said it coldly. I offered to help him off with his surtout. Softly, child, said he, you will pull my arm awry. It was a trifle, but I felt my heart swell when he said this.

He entered the room; my mother took his hand in hers. You are terribly cold, my love, said she, and she drew his chair nearer to the fire; he threw aside his hat and whip, without speaking a word. In the centre of the table, which was covered for supper, I had placed a bowl of milk, dressed in a way I knew he liked, and had garnished it with some artificial flowers, in the manner we used to have our desserts done at Belville. He fixed his eyes on it, and I began to make ready my answer to a question I supposed he would ask, who had trimmed it so nicely? but he started hastily from his chair, and, snatching up this little piece of ornament, threw it into the fire, saying, We have now no title to finery. This was too much for me; it was foolish, very foolish, but I could not help letting fall some tears. He looked sternly at me; and, muttering some words which I could not hear, walked out of the room, and slapped the door roughly behind him. I threw myself on my mother's neck, and wept outright.

Our supper was silent and sullen; to me the more painful, from the mortifying reverse which I felt from what I had expected. My father did not taste the milk; my mother asked him to eat of it with an

affected ease in her manner; but I observed her voice falter as she asked him. As for me, I durst not look him in the face; I trembled every time the servant left the room: there was a protection, even in his presence, which I could not bear to lose. The table was scarcely uncovered, when my father said he was tired and sleepy; my mother laid hold of the opportunity, and offered to accompany him to their chamber: she bade me good night; my father was silent; but I answered as if addressing myself to both.

Maria! in my hours of visionary indulgence, I have sometimes painted to myself a husband—no matter whom—comforting me amidst the distresses which fortune had laid upon us. I have smiled upon him through my tears; tears, not of anguish, but of tenderness;—our children were playing around us, unconscious of misfortune; we had taught them to be humble and to be happy;—our little shed was reserved to us, and their smiles to cheer it—I have imagined the luxury of such a scene, and affliction became a part of my dream of happiness!

Thus far I had written last night; I found at last my body tired and drowsy, though my mind was ill disposed to obey it: I laid aside my pen, and thought of going to bed; but I continued sitting in my chair, for an hour after, in that state of languid thinking, which, though it has not strength enough to fasten on any single object, can wander without weariness over a thousand. The clock striking one, dissolved the enchantment; I was then with my Maria, and I went to bed but to continue my dream of her.

Why did I wake to anxiety and disquiet?—Selfish! that I should not bear without murmuring my proportion of both!—I met my mother in the parlour, with a smile of meekness and serenity on her countenance; she did not say a single word of last night's

incident; and I saw she purposely avoided giving me any opportunity of mentioning it; such is the delicacy of her conduct with regard to my father. What an angel this woman is! Yet I fear, my friend, she is a very woman in her sufferings.

She was the only speaker of our company, while my father sat with us. He rode out soon after breakfast, and did not return till dinner-time. I was almost afraid of his return, and was happy to see, from my window, somebody riding down the lane along with him. This was a gentleman of considerable rank and fortune in our neighbourhood, the Count Louis de Montauban. I do not know how it has happened, but I cannot recollect having ever mentioned him to you before. He is not one of those very interesting characters, which are long present with the mind; yet his worth is universally acknowledged, and his friendship to my father, though of late acquisition, deserves more than ordinary acknowledgement from us. His history we heard from others, soon after our arrival here; since our acquaintance began, we have had it, at different times, from himself; for though he has not much frankness about him to discover his secrets, he possesses a manly firmness, which does not shrink from the discovery.

His father was only brother to the late Francis Count de Montauban; his mother, the daughter of a noble family in Spain, died in childbed of him, and he was soon after deprived of his remaining parent, who was killed at a siege in Flanders. His uncle took, for some time, the charge of his education; but, before he attained the age of manhood, he discovered, in the count's behaviour, a want of that respect which should have distinguished the relation from the dependent; and after having, in vain, endeavoured to assert it, he took the resolution of leaving France, and travelled a-foot into Spain, where he met with a very kind recep-

tion from the relations of his mother. By their assistance, he was afterwards enabled to acquire a respectable rank in the Spanish army, and served, in a series of campaigns, with distinguished reputation. About a year ago, his uncle died unmarried: by this event he succeeded to the family estate, part of which is situated in this neighbourhood; and since that time, he has been generally here, employed in superintending it; for which, it seems, there was the greater necessity, as the late count, who commonly lived at the old hereditary seat of his ancestors, had, for some of the last years of his life, been entirely under the dominion of rapacious domestics, and suffered his affairs in this quarter, to run, under their guidance, into the greatest confusion.

Though, in France, a man of fortune's residence at his country-seat is so unusual, that it might be supposed to enhance the value of such a neighbour, yet the circumstance of Montauban's great fortune was a reason, I believe, for my father shunning any advances towards his acquaintance. The count at last contrived to introduce himself to us (which, for what reason I know not, he seemed extremely anxious to do,) in a manner that flattered my father; not by offering favours, but by asking one. He had led a walk through a particular part of his ground, along the course of a brook, which runs also through a narrow neck of my father's property, by the intervention of which the count's territory was divided. This stripe of my father's ground would have been a purchase very convenient for Montauban; but, with that peculiar delicacy which our situation required, he never made the proposition of a purchase, but only requested that he might have leave to open a passage through an old wall, by which it was inclosed, that he might enjoy a continuation of that romantic path, which the banks of the rivulet afforded. His desire was expressed so po-

litely, that it could not be refused. Montauban soon after paid a visit of thanks to my father, on the occasion; this last was pleased with an incident, which gave him back the power of conferring an obligation, and therefore, I presume, looked on his new acquaintance with a favourable eye; he praised his appearance to my mother and me; and since that day, they have improved their acquaintance into a very cordial intimacy.

In many respects, indeed, their sentiments are congenial. A high sense of honour is equally the portion of both. Montauban, from his long service in the army, and his long residence in Spain, carries it to a very romantic height. My father, from a sense of his situation, is now more jealous than ever of his. Montauban seems of a melancholy disposition. My father was far from being so once; but misfortune has now given his mind a tincture of sadness. Montauban thinks lightly of the world, from principle. My father, from ill-usage, holds it in disgust. This last similarity of sentiment is a favourite topic of their discourse, and their friendship seems to increase, from every mutual observation which they make. Perhaps it is from something amiss in our nature, but I have often observed the most strict of our attachments to proceed from an alliance of dislike.

There is something hard and unbending in the character of the count, which, though my father applauds it under the title of magnanimity, I own myself womanish enough not to like. There is a yielding weakness, which to me is more amiable than the inflexible right; it is an act of my reason to approve of the last; but my heart gives its suffrage to the first, without pausing to inquire for a cause.—I am awkward at defining; you know what I mean; the last is stern in Montauban, the first is smiling in Maria.

Mean time, I wish to feel the most perfect gratitude for his unwearied assiduities to oblige my father and his family. When I think on his uncommon friendship, I try to forget that severity, which holds me somehow at a distance from him.

Though I meant a description, I have scrawled through most of my paper without beginning one. I have made but some slight sketches of his mind; of his person I have said nothing, which, from a woman to a woman, should have been mentioned the soonest. It is such as becomes a soldier, rather manly than handsome, with an air of dignity in his mien that borders on haughtiness. In short, were I to study for a sentence, I should say, that Montauban was made to command respect from all, to obtain praise from most, but to engage the affections of few.

His company to-day was of importance to us. By ourselves every one's look seemed the spy on another's. We were conscious of remembering what all affected to forget. Montauban's conversation reconciled us, without our being sensible of it.

My father, who (as it commonly happens to the aggressor in those cases) had perhaps felt more from his own harshness, than either my mother or I, seemed happy to find an opportunity of being restored to his former familiarity. He was gayer, and more in spirits, than I have seen him for a long time past. He insisted on the count's spending the evening with us. Montauban at first excused himself. He had told us, in the course of conversation, of his having appropriated the evening to business at home; but my father would listen to no apology, and the other was at last overcome. He seems indeed, to feel an uncommon attachment to my father, and to enjoy more pleasure in his company, than I should have expected him to find in the society of any one.

You are now, in the account of correspondence, I do not know how deep, in my debt. I mean not to ask regular returns; but write to me, I entreat you, when you can; and write larger letters than the last. Put down every thing, so it be what you feel at the time; and tell every incident that can make me present with you, were it but the making up of a cap that pleases you. You see how much paper I contrive to blot with trifles.

LETTER IV.

Montauban to Segarva.

You saw, my friend, with what reluctance I left Spain, though it was to return to the country of my birth, to the inheritance of my fathers. I trembled when I thought what a scene of confusion the strange mismanagement of my uncle had left me to disentangle; but it required only a certain degree of fortitude to begin that business, and it was much sooner concluded than I looked for. I have now almost wrought myself out of work, and yet the situation is not so disgusting as I imagined. I have long learned to despise that flippancy which characterizes my countrymen; yet, I know not how it is, they gain upon me in spite of myself; and while I resolve to censure, I am forced to smile.

From Paris, however, I fled, as if it had been infested with a pestilence. Great towns certainly contain many excellent persons; but vice and folly predominate so much, that a search after their opposites is beyond the limits of ordinary endurance; and, besides the superiority of numbers, the first are ever perked up to view, while the latter are solicitous to avoid observation.

In the country I found a different style of character. Here are impertinents who talk nonsense, and rogues who cheat where they can; but they are somewhat nearer nature in both. I met with some female relations, who stunned me with receipts in cookery, and prescriptions in physic; but they did not dictate to my taste in letters, or my judgement in philosophy. Ignorance I can bear without emotion; but the affectation of learning gives me a fit of the spleen.

I make indeed but an awkward figure among them; for I am forced, by representing my uncle, to see a number of our family friends, whom I never heard of. These good people, however, bear with me wonderfully, and I am not laughed at, as you predicted.

But they sometimes pester me with their civilities. It is their principle, that a man cannot be happy alone; and they tire me with their company, out of pure good-nature. I have endeavoured to undeceive them: the greater part do not understand my hints; those who do, represent me as a sour ungracious being, whom Spain has taught pride and sullenness. This is well, and I hope the opinion will propagate itself apace. One must be somewhat hated, to be independent of folly.

There is but one of my neighbours, whose temper I find at all congenial to my own. He has been taught by misfortune to be serious: for that I love him; but misfortune has not taught him to be humble: for this I love him the more. There is a pride which becomes every man; a poor man, of all others, should possess it.

His name is Pierre de Roubigné. His family, of that rank which is perhaps always necessary to give a fixed liberality of sentiment. From the consequences of an unfortunate lawsuit, his circumstances became so involved, that he was obliged to sell his paternal estate, and retire to a small purchase he had made in

this province, which is situated in the midst of my territories here. My steward pointed it out to me, as a thing it was proper for me to be master of, and hinted, that its owner's circumstances were such as might induce him to part with it. Such is the language of those devourers of land, who wish to make a wilderness around them, provided they are lords of it. For my part, I find much less pleasure in being the master of acres, than the friend of men.

From the particulars of Mons. de Roubigné's story, which I learned soon after I came hither, I was extremely solicitous of his acquaintance; but I found it not easy to accomplish my desire, the distance which great minds preserve in adversity keeping him secluded from the world. By humouring that delicacy, which ruled him in his acceptance of a new acquaintance, I have at last succeeded. He admits me as his guest, without the ceremony which the little folks around us oblige me to endure from them. He does not think himself under the necessity of eternally talking to entertain me; and we sometimes spend a morning together, pleased with each other's society, though we do not utter a dozen sentences.

His youth has been enlightened by letters, and informed by travel; but what is still more valuable, his mind has been early impressed with the principles of manly virtue: he is liberal in sentiment, but rigid in the feelings of honour.

Were I to mark his failings, I might observe a degree of peevishness at mankind, which, though mankind may deserve, it is the truest independence not to allow them. He feels that chagrin at his situation, which constitutes the victory of misfortune over us—but I have not known misfortune, and am therefore not entitled to observe it.

His family consists of a wife and daughter, his only surviving child, who are equally estimable with him-

self. I have not, at present, time to describe them. I have given you this sketch of him, because I think he is such a man as might be the friend of my Segarva. There are so few in this trifling world, whose mutual excellence deserves mutual esteem, that the intervention of a hundred leagues should not bar their acquaintance; and we increase the sense of virtue in ourselves, by the consciousness of virtue in others.

LETTER V.

Montauban to Segarva.

I DESCRIBED to you, in my last, the father of that family, whose acquaintance I have chiefly cultivated since I came hither. His wife and daughter I promised to describe—at least such a promise was implied —perhaps I find pleasure in describing them—I have time enough at least for the description—but no matter for the cause.

Madame de Roubigné has still the remains of a fine woman; and, if I may credit a picture in her husband's possession, was in her youth remarkably handsome. She has now a sort of stillnes in her look, which seems the effect of resignation in adversity. Her countenance bears the marks of a sorrow, which we do not so much pity as revere; she has yielded to calamity, while her husband has struggled under its pressure, and hence has acquired a composure, which renders that uneasiness I remarked in him more observable by the contrast. I have been informed of one particular, which, besides the difference of sex, may, in a great measure, account for this. She brought Roubigné a very considerable fortune, the greatest part of which was spent in that unfortunate lawsuit I mentioned. A consciousness of this makes the husband impatient

under their present circumstances, from the very principle of generosity, which leads the wife to appear contented.

In her conversation she is guided by the same evenness of temper. She talks of the world as of a scene where she is a spectator merely, in which there is something for virtue to praise, for charity to pardon; and smooths the spleen of her husband's observations by some palliative remark which experience has taught her.

One consolation she has ever at hand: Religion, the friend of calamity, she had cultivated in her most prosperous days. Affliction, however, has not driven her to enthusiasm; her feelings of devotion are mild and secret, her expression gentle and charitable. I have always observed your outrageously religious, amidst their severity to their neighbours, manifest a discontent with themselves; spirits like Madame de Roubigné's have that inward peace which is easily satisfied with others. The rapturous blaze of devotion is more allied to vanity than to happiness; like the torch of the great, it distresses its owner, while it flames in the eye of the public; the other, like the rush-light of the cottager, cheers the little family within, while it seeks not to be seen of the world.

But her daughter, her lovely daughter!—with all the gentleness of her mother's disposition, she unites the warmth of her father's heart, and the strength of her father's understanding. Her eyes, in their silent state (if I may use the term), give the beholder every idea of feminine softness; when sentiment of feeling animates them, how eloquent they are! When Roubigné talks, I hate vice, and despise folly; when his wife speaks, I pity both; but the music of Julia's tongue gives the throb of virtue to my heart, and lifts my soul to somewhat superhuman.

I mention not the graces of her form; yet they are such as would attract the admiration of those by whom the beauties of her mind might not be understood. In one as well as the other, there is a remarkable conjunction of tenderness with dignity; but her beauty is of that sort, on which we cannot properly decide independently of the soul, because the first is never uninformed by the latter.

To the flippancy, which we are apt to ascribe to females of her age, she seems utterly a stranger. Her disposition indeed appears to lean, in an uncommon degree, towards the serious. Yet she breaks forth at times into filial attempts at gaiety, to amuse that disquiet which she observes in her father; but even then it looks like a conquest over the natural pensiveness of her mind. This melancholy might be held a fault in Julia; but the fortune of her family has been such, that none but those who are totally exempted from thinking could have looked on it with indifference.

It is only, indeed, when she would confer happiness on others, that she seems perfectly to enjoy it. The rustics around us talk of her affability and good-humour with the liveliest gratitude; and I have been witness to several scenes, where she dispensed mirth and gaiety to some poor families in our neighbourhood, with a countenance as cheerful as the most unthinking of them all. At those seasons I have been tempted from the gravity natural to me, and borrowed from trifles a temporary happiness. Had you seen me yesterday dancing in the midst of a band of grape-gatherers, you would have blushed for your friend; but I danced with Julia.

I am called from my description by the approach of her whom I would describe. Her father has sent his servant to inform me, that his wife and daughter have agreed to accompany him in a walk, as far as to a farm of

mine, where I have set about trying some experiments in agriculture. Roubigné is skilful in those things: as for me, I know I shall lose money by them; but it will not be lost to the public; and if I can even show what will not succeed, I shall do something for the good of my neighbours. Methinks too, if Julia de Roubigné would promise to come and look at them—But I see their family from my window. Farewell.

LETTER VI.

Julia to Maria.

You rally me on the subject of the Count de Montauban, with that vivacity which I have so often envied you the possession of. You say, you are sure you should like him vastly. What a blessing, in a remote province, where one is in danger of dying of *ennui*, to have this stiff, crusty, honourable Spaniard, to tease and make a fool of! I have no thoughts of such amusement, and therefore I do not like him vastly; but, I confess, I begin to like him better than I did. He has lost much of that sternness (dignity my father calls it) which used to chill me when I approached him. He can talk of common things in a common way: and but yesterday he danced with me on the green, amidst a troop of honest rustics, whom I wished to make happy at the small expense of sharing their happiness. All this, I'll allow, at first, seemed foreign to the man; but he did not, as I have seen some of your wise people do, take great credit for letting himself down so low. He did it with a design of frankness, though some of his native loftiness remained in the execution.

We are much in his debt on the score of domestic happiness. He has become so far one of the family

as to be welcome at all times, a privilege he makes very frequent use of; and we find ourselves so much at ease with him, that we never think even of talking more than we choose, to entertain him. He will sit for an hour at the table where I am working, with no other amusement than that of twisting shreds of my catgut into whimsical figures.

I think that he also is not the worse for our society; I suppose him the happier for it, from the change in his sentiments of others. He often disputes with my father, and will not allow the world to be altogether so bad as he used to do. My father, who can now be merry at times, jokes him on his apostasy. He appealed to me this morning for the truth of his argument. I told him I was unable to judge, because I knew nothing of the world. And yet (replied he gallantly), it is from you one should learn to think better of it: I never knew, till I came hither, that it contained any thing so valuable as Mademoiselle de Roubigné. I think he looked foolish when he paid me this compliment. I curtsied, with composure enough. It is not from men like Montauban that one blushes at a compliment.

Besides the general addition to our good-humour, his society is particularly useful to me. His discourse frequently turns on subjects, from the discussion of which, though I am somewhat afraid to engage in it, I always find myself the wiser. Amidst the toils of his military life, Montauban has contrived to find leisure for the pursuit of very extensive and useful knowledge. This, though little solicitous to display, he is always ready to communicate; and, as he finds me willing to be instructed, he seems to find a pleasure in instructing me.

My mother takes every opportunity of encouraging this sort of conversation. You have often heard her sentiments on the mutual advantage of such inter-

course between the sexes. You will remember her frequent mention of a male friend, who died soon after her marriage, from whom, she has told us, she derived most of the little accomplishment her mind can boast of. Men (she used to say) though they talk much of their friends, are seldom blest with a friend. The nature of that companionship, which they mistake for friendship, is really destructive of its existence; because the delicacy of the last shrinks from the rude touch of the former; and that, however pure in their own sentiments, the society which they see each other hold with third persons, is too gross, not to break those tender links, which are absolutely essential to friendship. Girls (she said) easily form a connexion of a more refined sort; but as it commonly begins with romance, it seldom outlasts the years of childhood, except when it degenerates into cabal and intrigue; but that the friendship of one of each sex, when so circumstanced as to be distant from love (which she affirmed might be the case), has that combination of strength and delicacy which is equally formed to improve and delight.

There may be much reason in her arguments; but I cannot, notwithstanding my esteem for him, easily think of Montauban as my friend. He has not yet quite obliterated the fears I felt on our first acquaintance. He has, however, done much to conquer them; and, if he goes on as he has begun, I know not what in time he may arrive at. Mean time I am contented with Maria: our friendship has at least endured beyond the period assigned by my mother. Shall it not always endure? I know the answer which your heart will make—mine throbs while I think of it.

LETTER VII.

Montauban to Segarva.

You complain of my silence. In truth I have nothing to say but to repeat, what is very unnecessary, my assurances of friendship to Segarva. My life is of a sort that produces nothing; I mean in recital. To myself it is not vacant: I can be employed in marking the growth of a shrub; but I cannot describe its progress, nor even tell why its progress pleases me.

If the word society is confined to our own species, I enjoy very little of it. I should except that of the family I gave you an account of some time ago. I fear I am too often with them; I frequently resolve to be busy at home; but I have scarce sat down to my table, when the picture of Roubigné's parlour presents itself, and I think that my business may wait till to-morrow.

I blush to tell you what a fool I am grown; or is it that I am nearer the truth than formerly? I begin to entertain doubts of my own dignity, and to think that man is not altogether formed for the sublime place I used to allot him. One can be very happy with much less trouble, than very wise: I have discovered this at Roubigné's. It is but conquering the name of trifles, which our pride would give things, and my hours at Roubigné's are as importantly filled up as any employment could make them.

After all, what is our boasted philosophy to ourselves or others? Its consequence is often borrowed, more from the language it speaks, than the object it pursues; and its attainments valued, more from their difficulty, than their usefulness. But life takes its complexion from inferior things; and Providence has wisely placed its real blessings within the reach of

moderate abilities. We look for a station beyond them; it is fit that we too should have our reward; and it is found in our vanity. It is only from this cause that I sometimes blush, as if I were unworthily employed, when I feel myself happy in doing nothing at Mons. de Roubigné's fire-side.

Yet do not suppose that we are always employed in talking of trifles: she has a mind no less capable of important research, of exalted sentiment.—

I am hastily called away;—it saves you the continuation of a very dull letter. I send this, such as it is, more as a title to receive one from you, than that it should stand for any thing of itself.

Farewell.

LETTER VIII.

Julia to Maria.

Pity me, Maria, pity me! even that quiet that my letters of late described, which I was contented to call happiness, is denied me. There is a fatality which every-where attends the family of the unfortunate Roubigné; here, to the abodes of peace, perplexity pursues it; and it is destined to find new distress, from those scanty sources to which it looked for comfort.

The Count de Montauban—why did he see me? why did he visit here? why did I listen to his discourse? though, Heaven knows, I meant not to deceive him! —He has declared himself the lover of your Julia!—I own his virtues, I esteem his character, I know the gratitude too we owe him; from all those circumstances I am doubly distressed at my situation; but it is impossible, it is impossible that I should love him. How could he imagine that I should? or how does he still

continue to imagine that I may be won to love him? I softened my refusal, because I would distress no man; Montauban of all men the least: but surely it was determined enough, to cut off all hopes of my ever altering my resolution.

Should not his pride teach him to cease such mortifying solicitations? How has it, in this instance alone, forsaken him? Methinks too he has acted ungenerously, in letting my mother know of his addresses. When I hinted this, he fell at my feet, and entreated me to forgive a passion so earnest as his, for calling in every possible assistance. Cruel! that, in this tenderest concern, that sex which is naturally feeble, should have other weaknesses to combat besides its own.

I know my mother's gentleness too well to have much to fear from her; but the idea of my father's displeasure is terrible. This morning, when I entreated my mother not to mention this matter to him, she informed me of her having already told him. It was an affair, she said, of so much importance to his family, that she durst not venture to conceal it. There was something in the coolness of her words that hurt me; but I stifled the answer which I was about to make, and only observed, that of that family I was the nearest concerned. You shall judge for yourself, my dear girl, (said she, resuming the natural gentleness of her manner,) I will never pretend to control your affections. Your opinions I always hold it my duty to guide; experience, dearly bought perhaps, has given me some title to guide them. Believe me, there are dreams of romantic affection, which are apt to possess young minds, the reality of which is not to be found in nature. I do not blame you for doubting this at present; but the time will come when you shall be convinced of its truth.

Is it so, Maria? Shall that period ever arrive, when

my present feelings shall be forgotten? But, if it should, are they not *now* my conscience, and should I not be unjust to Montauban and myself, were I *now* to act against them?

I have seen my father. He came into my room in his usual way, and asked me, If I chose to walk with him. His words were the same they were wont to be; but I could discover that his thoughts were different. He looked on me with a determined countenance, as if he prepared himself for contradiction. I concealed my uneasiness, however, and attended him with that appearance of cheerfulness, which I make it a point of duty to wear in his presence. He seemed to have expected something different; for I saw he was softened from that hostility, may I call it, of aspect, which he had assumed at first, and during our walk he expressed himself to me with unusual tenderness. Alas! too much so, Maria! Why am I obliged to offend him? When he called me the support and solace of his age; when he blessed Heaven for leaving him, in the worst of his misfortunes, his Julia to comfort him; why could I not then, amidst my filial tears, when my heart should have poured itself out in duty and gratitude, why could I not then assure him of its obedience?

Write to me, for pity's sake, write to me speedily ——Assist me, counsel me, guide me—but say not that I should listen to Montauban.

LETTER IX.

Montauban to Segarva.

I SIT down to write to Segarva, with the idea of his presence at the time, and the idea was wont to be a

pleasant one; it is now mixed with a sort of uneasiness, like that which a man feels, who has offended, and would ask to be forgiven. The consciousness of what I mean by this letter to reveal, hangs like guilt upon my mind; therefore it is that I have so long delayed writing. If you shall think it weakness—Yet I know not how I can bear chiding on this point.

But why should I doubt of your approving it? Our conversations on the sex might be just, but they touch not Julia de Roubigné. Could my friend but see, but know her, I should need no other advocate to excuse the change of my sentiments.

Let me tell him then of my passion for that loveliest of women; that it has prompted me to offer her a hand which, he has sometimes heard me declare, should never give away my freedom. This sounded like something manly, but it was, in truth, a littleness of soul. He who pauses in the exercise of every better affection of the heart, till he calculates the chances of danger or of ridicule, is the veriest of cowards; but the resolution, though frequently made, is seldom or never adhered to; the voice of nature, of wisdom, and of virtue is against it.

To acquire such a friend as Julia de Roubigné—but friend is a word insignificant of the connexion—to have one soul, one fate with her; to participate her happiness, to share her griefs! to be that single being to whom, the next to Divinity, she pours out the feelings of her heart, to whom she speaks the gentlest of her wishes, to whom she sighs the most delicate of her fears!—to grant those wishes, to soothe those fears! to have such a woman (like our guardian angel, without his superiority) to whom we may unbosom our own! —the creation of pleasures is little; this is á creation of soul to enjoy them!

Call not mine the lauguage of doting love; I am

confident how much reason is on my side, and will now hear Segarva with patience.

He will tell me of that fascinating power which women possess when they would win us, which fades at once from the character of wife.——But I know Julia de Roubigné well; she has grown up under the eye of the best of parents, unschooled in the practices of her sex; she is ignorant of those arts of delusion, which are taught by the society of women of the world. I have had opportunities of seeing her at all seasons, and in every attitude of mind:—Her soul is too gentle for the touch of art; an effort at deceit would bring it even to torture.

He will remind me of the disparity of age, and tell me of the danger of her affections wandering from one, whom, on comparison with herself, she will learn to think an old man.—But Julia is of an order of beings superior to those whom external form, and the trifling language of gallantry, can attract. Had she the flippancy of mind which those shallow qualities are able to allure, I think, Segarva, she were beneath the election of Montauban.

I remember our former conversations on the subject of marriage, when we were both of one side; and that then you observed in me a certain wakeful jealousy of honour, which, you said, the smile of a wife on another man would rouse into disquiet.—Perhaps I have been sometimes too hasty that way, in the sense of affronts from men; but the nicety of a soldier's character, which must ever be out of the reach of question, may excuse it. I think I never showed suspicion of my friends; and why to this lovely one, the delicacy of whose virtue I would vouch against the world, should I be more unjust than to others?—There is no fiend so malicious, as to breathe detraction against my Julia.

In short, I have canvassed all your objections, and,

I think, I have answered them all. Forgive me for supposing you to make them; and forgive me, when I tell you, that, while I did so, methought I loved you less than I was wont to do.

But I am anticipating blessings which may never arrive: for the gentlest of her sex is yet cruel to Montauban. But, I trust, it is only the maiden coyness of a mind naturally fearful. She owned her esteem, her friendship: these are poor to the returns I ask; but they must be exchanged for sentiments more tender, they must yield to the ardour of mine. They must, they shall: I feel my heart expand with a glad foreboding, that tells it of happiness to come. While I enjoy it, I wish for something more: let me hear then that my Segarva enjoys it too.

LETTER X.

Julia to Maria.

You know not the heart of your Julia; yet impute it not to a want of confidence in your friendship. Its perplexity is of a nature so delicate, that I am sometimes afraid even to think on it myself; and often, when I meant to reveal it to you, my utterance failed in the attempt.

The character you have heard of the Count de Montauban is just; it is perhaps even less than he merits; for his virtues are of that unbending kind, that does not easily stoop to the opinion of the world; to which the world, therefore, is not profuse of its eulogium. I revere his virtues, I esteem his good qualities; but I cannot love him.—This must be my answer to others: but Maria has a right to something more; she may be told my weakness, for her friendship can pity and support it.

Learn then that I have not a heart to bestow.—I blush even while I write this confession.—Yet to love merit like Savillon's, cannot be criminal.—Why then do I blush again, when I think of revealing it?

You have seen him at Belville; alas! you know not his worth; it is not easy to know it. Gentle, modest, retired from notice,—it was the lot of your Julia to discover it. She prized it the more, that it was not common to all; and while she looked on it as the child of her own observation, it was vanity to know, it was virtue to cherish.—Alas! she was unconscious of that period when it ceased to be virtue, and grew into passion.

But whither am I wandering? I meant only to relate; but our feelings speak for themselves, before we can tell why we feel.

Savillon's father and mine were friends; his father was unfortunate, and mine was the friend of his misfortune; hence arose a sort of dependence on the one side, which, on the other, I fear, was never entirely forgotten. I have sometimes observed this weakness in my father; but the pride that leads to virtue may be pardoned. He thinks of a man as his inferior, only that he may do him a kindness more freely. Savillon's family, indeed, was not so noble as his mind; my father warmly acknowledged the excellence of the last; but he had been taught, from earliest infancy, to consider a misfortune the want of the former.

After the death of old Savillon, my father's friendship and protection were transferred to his son; the time he could spare from study was commonly spent at Belville. He appeared to feel in his situation that dependence I mentioned; in mean souls, this produces servility; in liberal minds, it is the nurse of honourable pride. There was a silent melancholy about Savillon, which disdained the notice of superficial observers, and was never satisfied with superficial ac-

quirement. His endowments did not attract the eye of the world; but they fixed the esteem and admiration of his friends. His friends indeed were few; and he seemed not to wish them many.

To know such a man; to see his merit; to regret that yoke which Fortune had laid upon him—I am bewildered in sentiment again.—In truth, my story is the story of sentiment. I would tell you how I began to love Savillon; but the trifles, by which I now mark the progress of this attachment, are too little for description.

We were frequently together, at that time of life when a boy and girl are not alarmed at being together. Savillon's superior attainments made him a sort of master for your Julia. He used to teach me ideas; sometimes he flattered me, by saying, that, in his turn, he learned from me. Our feelings were often equally disgusted with many of the common notions of mankind, and we early began to form a league against them. We began with an alliance of argument; but the heart was always appealed to in the last resort.

The time at last came, when I began to fear something improper in our friendship; but the fears that should guard, betray us. They make pictures to our fancy, which the reason they call to their assistance cannot overcome. In my rambles through the woods at Belville, I have often turned into a different walk from that I first designed to take, because I suspected Savillon was there!—Alas! Maria, an ideal Savillon attended me, more dangerous than the real.

But it was only from his absence I acquired a certain knowledge of myself. I remember, on the eve of his departure, we were walking in the garden; my father was with us. He had been commending some carnation seeds, which he had just received from an eminent florist at Versailles. Savillon was examining some of

them, which my father had put into his hand; and soon after, when we came to a small plot, which I used to call my garden, he sowed a few of them in a particular corner of it. I took little notice at the time; but not long after he was gone, the flowers began to appear. You cannot easily imagine the effect this trifling circumstance had upon me. I used to visit the spot by stealth, for a certain conscious feeling prevented my going openly thither, and watched the growth of those carnations with the care of a parent for a darling child; and when they began to droop, (I blush, Maria, to tell it) I have often watered them with my tears.

Such is the account of my own feelings; but who shall tell me those of Savillon? I have seen him look such things!—but, alas! Maria, our wishes are traitors, and give us false intelligence. His soul is too noble to pour itself out in those trivial speeches which the other sex often addresses to ours. Savillon knows not the language of compliment; yet methinks from Savillon it would please. May not a sense of his humble fortune prevent him from speaking what he feels? When we were first acquainted, Julia de Roubigné was a name of some consequence; fallen as she now is, it is now her time to be haughty, and Savillon is too generous to think otherwise. In our most exalted estate, my friend, we are not so difficult to win as we are sometimes imagined to be: it unfortunately happens, that the best men think us the most so.

I know I am partial to my own cause; yet I am sensible of all the impropriety with which my conduct is attended. My *conduct* did I call it? It is not my *conduct*, I err but in *thought*. Yet, I fear, I suffered these thoughts at first without alarm. They have grown up, unchecked, in my bosom, and now I would control them in vain. Should I know myself indiffe-

rent to Savillon, would not my pride set me free? I sigh, and dare not say that it would.

But there is something tenderer and less tumultuous in that feeling with which I now remember him, than when his presence used to alarm me. Obliged to leave France, where fortune had denied him an inheritance, he is gone to Martinique, on the invitation of an uncle who has been several years settled in that island. When I think of the track of ocean which separates us, my head grows dizzy as I think!—that this little heart should have its interests extended so far! that, on the other side of the Atlantic, there should exist a being, for whom it swells with imaginary hope, and trembles, alas! much oftener trembles, with imaginary fear!

In such a situation, wonder not at my coldness to Montauban. I know not how it is; but, methinks, I esteem him less than I did, from the preposterous reason, that he loves me when I would not have him. I owe him gratitude in return, though I cannot give him love; but I involuntarily refuse him the first, because he asks the latter, which I have not to bestow.

Would that he had never seen your Julia! I expect not a life of happiness, but had looked for one of quiet. There is something in the idea even of peaceful sadness, which I could bear without repining; but I am not made for struggling with perplexity.

LETTER XI.

Julia to Maria.

From your letters, Maria, I always find comfort and satisfaction: and never did one arrive more seasonably than the last. When the soul is torn by contrary emotions, it is then we wish for a friend to reconcile

us to ourselves: such a friend am I blest with in you. Advice from my Maria is the language of wisdom without its severity; she can feel what is due to nature, while she speaks what is required of prudence.

I have ever thought as you do, that it is not enough for a woman not to swerve from the duty of a wife; that to love another more than a husband, is an adultery of the heart; and not to love a husband with undivided affection, is a virtual breach of the vow that unites us.

But I dare not own to my father the attachment from which these arguments are drawn. There is a sternness in his idea of honour, from which I shrink with affright. Images of vengeance and destruction paint themselves to my mind, when I think of his discovering that weakness which I cannot hide from myself. Even before my mother, as his wife, I tremble, and dare not disclose it.

How hard is the fate of your Julia! Unhappy from feelings which she cherished as harmless, which still she cannot think criminal, yet denied even the comfort of revealing, except to her Maria, the cause of her distress! Amidst the wreck of our family's fortunes, I shared the common calamity; must I now be robbed of the little treasure I had saved, spoiled of my peace of mind, and forbid the native freedom of my affections?

I am called to dinner. One of our neighbours is below, a distant relation of Montauban, with his wife and daughter. Another stranger, Lisette says, is also there, a captain of a ship, she thinks, whom she remembers having seen formerly at Belville. Must I go then, and look unmeaning cheerfulness, and talk indifferent things, while my heart is torn with secret agitation? To feel distress, is painful; but to dissemble it, is torture.

I have now time to think, and power to express my thoughts.—It is midnight, and the world is hushed around me! After the agitation of this day, I feel something silently sad at my heart, that can pour itself out to my friend!

Savillon! cruel Savillon!—but I complain, as if it were falsehood to have forgotten her whom perhaps he never loved.

She too must forget him—Maria! he is the husband of another! That sea-captain, who dined with my father to-day, is just returned from Martinique. With a beating heart, I heard him questioned of Savillon. With a beating heart I heard him tell of the riches he is said to have acquired by the death of that relation with whom he lived; but judge of its sensations, when he added, that Savillon was only prevented, by that event, from marrying the daughter of a rich planter, who had been destined for his wife on the very day his unele died, and whom he was still to marry as soon as decency would permit. And before this time (said the stranger) he must be her husband.

Before this time!—While I was cherishing romantic hopes; or, at least, while, amidst my distress, I had preserved inviolate the idea of his faith and my own.—But whither does this delusion carry me? Savillon has broken no faith; to me he never pledged it. Hide me, my friend, from the consciousness of my folly, or let it speak till its expiation be made, till I have banished Savillon from my mind.

Must I then banish him from my mind? Must I forget the scenes of our early days, the opinions we formed, the authors we read, the music we played together? There was a time when I was wont to retire from the profanity of vulgar souls to indulge the remembrance!

I heard somebody tap at my door. I was in that

state of mind which every thing terrifies: I fancy I looked terrified; for my mother, when she entered, begged me, in a low voice, not to be alarmed.

I come to see you, Julia (said she), before I go to bed; methought you looked ill at supper.—Did I, mamma? said I. I am well enough, indeed I am. She pressed my hand gently; I tried to smile; it was with difficulty I forbore weeping.

Your mind, child, continued my mother, is too tender, I fear it is, for this bad world. You must learn to conquer some of its feelings, if you would be just to yourself; but I can pardon you, for I know how bewitching they are; but trust me, my love, they must not be indulged too far; they poison the quiet of our lives. Alas! we have too little at best! I am aware how ungracious the doctrine is; but it is not the less true. If you ever have a child like yourself, you will tell her this, in your turn, and she will not believe you.

I was now weeping outright: it was the only answer I could make. My mother embraced me tenderly, and begged me to be calm, and endeavour to rest. I gave her my promise to go soon to bed: I am about to perform it; but to rest, Maria!—Farewell!

LETTER XII.

Julia to Maria.

While I write, my paper is blotted by my tears. They fall not now for myself, but for my father; you know not how he has wrung my heart.

He had another appointment this day with that procureur, who once visited our village before. Sure there is something terrible in that man's business. Alas! I formerly complained of my father's ill-humour,

when he returned to us from a meeting with him; I knew not, unjust that I was, what reason he then might have for his chagrin; I am still ignorant of their transactions, but have too good ground for making frightful conjectures.

On his return in the evening, he found my mother and me in separate apartments. She has complained of a slight disorder, from cold, I believe, these two or three days past, and had laid down on a couch in her own room, till my father should return. I was left alone, and sat down to read my favourite Racine.

Iphigenia! (said my father, taking up the book) Iphigenia! He looked on me piteously as he repeated the word. I cannot make you understand how much that single name expressed, nor how much that look. He pressed me to his bosom, and, as he kissed me, I felt a tear on his cheek.

Your mother is in her own chamber, my love. I offered to go and fetch her; he held my hand fast, as if he would not have me leave him. We stood for some moments thus, till my mother, who had heard his voice, entered the room.

We sat down by the fire, with my father between us. He looked on us alternately, with an affected cheerfulness, and spoke of indifferent things in a tone of gaiety rather unusual to him; but it was easy to see how foreign those appearances were to the real movements of his soul.

There was, at last, a pause of silence, which gave them time to overcome him. We saw a tear, which he was unable to repress, begin to steal from his eye. My dearest life! said my mother, laying hold of his hand and kissing it: I pressed the other in mine. Yes, said he, I am still rich in blessings, while these are left me. You, my love, have ever shared my fortune unrepining: I look up to you as to a superior being, who for all his benefits accepts of our gratitude as the only

recompense we have to make. This—this last retreat, where I looked for peace at least, though it was joined to poverty, we may soon be forced to leave!—Wilt thou still pardon, still comfort the man, whose evil destiny has drawn thee along with it to ruin?—And thou too, my child, my Julia! thou wilt not forsake thy father's gray hairs! Misfortune pursues him to the last: do thou but smile, my cherub, and he can bear it still. I threw my head on his knees, and bathed them with my tears. Do not unman me, he cried. I would support my situation as becomes a man. Methinks, for my own part, I could endure any thing—but my wife! my child! can they bear want and wretchedness! They can bear any thing with you, said my mother.—I started up, I know not how; I said something, I know not what; but, at that moment, I felt my heart roused as with the sound of a trumpet. My mother stood on one side, looking gently upwards, her hands, which were clasped together, leaning on my father's shoulder. He had one hand in his side, the other pressed on his bosom, his figure seeming to rise above itself, and his eye bent steadily forward.—Methought, as I looked on them, I was above the fears of humanity!

Le Blanc entered. 'Tis enough, said my father, taking one or two strides through the room, his countenance still preserving an air of haughtiness. Go to my chamber, said he to Le Blanc, I have some business for you. When they left the room, I felt the weakness of my soul return. I looked on my mother: she turned from me to hide her tears. I fell on her neck, and gave a loose to mine: Do not weep, Julia! was all she could utter, and she wept while she uttered it.

When Le Blanc returned, he was pale as ashes, and his hands shook so, that he could hardly carry in supper. My father came in a few minutes after him: he

took his place at table in his usual way, and strove to look as he was wont to do. During the time of supper, I observed Le Blanc fix his eye upon him; and, when he answered some little questions put to him by my father, his voice trembled in his throat.

After being left by ourselves, we were for some time silent. My mother at last spoke through her tears: Do not, my dearest Roubigné, said she, add to our misfortunes by an unkind concealment of them.—Has any new calamity befallen us?—When we retired hither, did we not know the worst?—I am afraid, not, answered he calmly, but my fears may not be altogether just. Do not be alarmed, my love, things may turn out better than they appear. I was affected too much before supper, and could not conceal it. There are weak moments, when we are not masters of ourselves. When I looked on my Julia and you, when I thought on those treasures, I was a very coward; but I have resumed my fortitude, and, I think, I can await the decision calmly. You shall know the whole, my love; but let me prevail on you to be comforted in the mean time: let not our distresses reach us before their time. He rung for Le Blanc, and gave him directions about some ordinary matters for next day.

As I went up stairs to my room, I saw that poor fellow standing at the window in the staircase. What do you here, said I, Le Blanc?—Ah! Miss Julia, said he, I know not well what I do. He followed me into my room, without my bidding him. My master has spoken so to me!—When he called me out before supper, as you saw, I went with him into his closet: he wrote something down, as if he were summing up money.—Here are so much wages due to you, Le Blanc, said he, putting the paper into my hand. You shall receive the money now; for I know not how long these louis may be mine to give you.—I could not

read the figures, I am sure I could not: I was struck blind, as it were, while he spoke so. He held out the gold to me: I drew back; for I would not have touched it for the world; but he insisted on my taking it, till I fell on my knees, and entreated him not to kill me by offering such a thing. At length he threw it down on his table, and I saw him wipe his eyes with his handkerchief.—My dear master! said I, and I believe I took hold of his hand, for seeing him so made me forget myself.—He waved his hand for me to leave the room; and, as I went down into the kitchen, if I had not burst into tears, I think I should have fainted away.

What will our destiny do with us? But I have learned, of late, to look on misery with less emotion. My soul has sunk into a stupid indifference, and sometimes, when she is roused at all, I conceive a sort of pride in meeting distress with fortitude, since I cannot hope for the attainment of happiness. But my father, Maria!—thus to bear at once the weakness of age, the gripe of poverty, the buffets of a world with which his spirit is already at war!—There my heart bleeds again! The complaints I have made of those little harshnesses I have sometimes felt from him, rise up to my memory in the form of remorse. Had he been more perfectly indulgent, methinks I should have pitied him less.

I was alarmed by hearing my mother's bell. She had been seized with a sudden fit of sickness, and had almost fainted. She is now a good deal better, and endeavours to make light of it; but at this time I am weaker than usual, and every appearance of danger frightens me. She chid me for not having been a-bed. I leave this open till the morning, when I can inform you how she does.

My mother has got up, though against the advice of my father and me. It may be fancy, but I think I see her eye languid and weighed down. I would stifle even the thoughts of danger, but cannot. Farewell.

LETTER XIII.

Lisette to Maria.

MADAM,

I AM commanded by my dear young lady to write to you, because she is not in a condition to write herself. I am sure, I am little able either. I have a poor head for inditing at any time; and, at present, it is so full of the melancholy scenes I have seen, that it goes round, as it were, at the thoughts of telling them. When I think what a lady I have lost!—To be sure, if ever there was a saint on earth, Madame de Roubigné was she—but Heaven's will be done!

I believe Miss Julia wrote you a letter the day she was taken ill. She did not say much, for it is not her way to be troublesome with her complaints; but we all saw by her looks how distressed she was. That night my master lay in a separate apartment, and I sat up by her bed-side; I heard her tossing and restless all night long, and now and then, when she got a few moments sleep, she would moan through it sadly, and presently wake again with a start, as if something had frightened her. In the morning a physician was sent for, who caused her to be blooded, and we thought her the better for it; but that was only for a short time, and next night she was worse than before, and complained of violent pains all over her body, and particularly her breast, and did not once shut her eyes to sleep. They took a greater quantity of blood from

her now than at first, and in the evening she had a blister put on, and the doctor sat by her part of the night. All this time Miss Julia was scarce ever out of her mother's chamber, except sometimes for a quarter of an hour, when the doctor begged of her to go, and he and I were both attending my lady. My master, indeed, that last night took her away, and prevailed on her to put off her clothes, and go to bed; and I heard him say to her in a whisper, when they had got upon the stairs, My Julia, have pity on yourself for my sake; let me not lose both:—and he wept, I saw, as he spoke; and she burst into tears.

The fourth day my lady continued much in the same way; but during the night she wandered a good deal, and spoke much of her husband and daughter, and frequently mentioned the Count de Montauban. The doctor ordered some things, I forget their proper name, to be laid to the soles of her feet, which seemed to relieve her head much; for she was more distinct towards morning, and knew me when I gave her drink, and called me by my name, which she had not done before, but had taken me for my young lady; but her voice was fainter than ever, and her physician looked more alarmed, when he visited her, than I had seen him do all the rest of her illness. My master was then in the room, and presently they went out together; my lady called me to her, and asked who had gone out? When I told her, she said, I guess the reason; but, Heaven be praised, I can think of it without terror.

Her daughter entered the room just then; she went up to her mother, and asked how she found herself? More at ease, my child, said she, but I will not deceive you into hope; I believe this momentary relief is a fatal symptom; my own feelings tell me so, and the doctor's looks confirm them.—Do not speak so, my dearest mother! for Heaven's sake, do not!—was all she could answer.

The doctor returned along with my master. He felt my lady's pulse: Miss Julia looked up wildly in his face: my master turned aside his head; but my lady, sweet angel, was calm and gentle as a lamb. Do not flatter me, said she, when the doctor let go her arm; I know you think I cannot recover.—I am not without hopes, madam, he replied, though, I confess, my fears are stronger than my hopes. My lady looked upwards for a moment, as I have often seen her do in health. Her daughter flung herself on the bed; I thought she had fallen into a swoon, and wanted to lift her up in my arms, though I was all of a tremble, and could hardly support myself. She started up, and would have spoken to her mother; but she wept, and sobbed, and could not. My lady begged her to be composed; my master could not speak, but he laid hold of her hand, and with a sort of gentle force, led her out of the room.

My lady complained of a dryness on her mouth and lips: the doctor gave her a glass of water, into which he poured a little somewhat out of a phial; she thanked him when she had drunk it, and seemed to speak easier: he said, he should leave her for a little: Mons. de Roubigné came in. Attend my daughter, said she to me; and I thought she wanted to be alone with my master.

I found Miss Julia in the parlour, leaning on the table, her cheek resting on her hand; when I spoke, she fell a-crying again. Soon after her father came in, and told her that her mother wished to see her: she returned along with my master, and they were some time together.

When I was called, I found my lady very low, by reason, as I suppose, she had worn herself out in speaking to them. The doctor said so too, when he returned; and in the afternoon, when I attended him down stairs, he said to me, That excellent lady is going fast.

He promised to see her again in two hours; but, before that time, we found she had grown much worse, and had lost her speech altogether: so he was fetched immediately, and when he came, he said nothing was to be done, but to make her as easy as possible, and offered to stay with her himself; which he did till about three next morning, when the dear good lady expired.

Her daughter fainted away, and it was a long time before the physician could recover her. It is wonderful how my master bears up, in order to comfort her: but one may see how heavy his grief is on him for all that. This morning Miss Julia desired me to attend her to the chamber, where her mother's corpse is laid. I was surprised to hear her speak so calmly as she did; and, though I made so free as to dissuade her much at first, yet she persuaded me she could bear it well enough; and I went with her accordingly. But when we came near the door, she stopped, and pulled me back into her room, and leaned on my arm, and fell into a violent fit of weeping; yet, when I begged her to give over thoughts of going, she said she was easy again, and would go. And thus two or three times she went and returned, till, at last, she opened the door, in desperation, as one may say, and I went in close behind her. The first sight we saw was Mons. de Roubigné at the bed-side, bending over the corpse, and holding one of its hands in his. Support me, Lisette, cried she; and leaned back on me again. My master turned about as she spoke; his daughter took courage, as it were, then, and walked up to the body, and took the hand that her father had just let drop, and kissed it. My child! said he. My father! answered my dear young lady, and they clasped one another in their arms. I could not help bursting into tears when I saw them; yet it was not altogether for grief neither: I know not how it was, but I weep

when I think of it yet. May Heaven bless them both, and preserve them to support one another!

My lady's bell rung, and she asked me if I had written to you. When I told her I had, she inquired if I had sent off the letter, and I was fain to say Yes, lest she should ask me to read it, and I knew how bad it must be for her, to hear all I have told your ladyship repeated. I am sure it is a sad scrawl, and little worth your reading, were it not that it concerns so dear a friend of yours as my lady is; and I have told things just as they happened, and as they came up to my mind, which is indeed but in a confused way still. But I ever am, Madam, with respect,

Your faithful and obedient servant,

LISETTE.

LETTER XIV.

Julia to Maria.

At last, my Maria, I am able to write. In the sad society of my afflicted father, I have found no restraint on my sorrows. We have indulged them to the full: their first turbulence is subsided, and the still quiet grief that now presses on my bosom, is such as my friend may participate.

Your loss is common to thousands. Such is the hackneyed consolation of ordinary minds, unavailing even when it is true. But mine is not common: it is not merely to lose a mother, the best, the most indulgent of mothers!—Think, Maria, think of your Julia's situation; how helpless, how forlorn she is!—A father pursued by misfortune to the wane of life; but, alas! he looks to her for support! He has outlived the last of his friends, and those who should have

been linked to him by the ties of blood, the same fatal disputes, which ruined his fortune, have shaken from his side. Beyond him,— and he is old, and affliction blasts his age!—beyond him, Maria, and but for thee, —the world were desolate around me.

My mother!—you have seen, you have known her. Her gentle but assured spirit was the tutelary power to which we ever looked up for comfort and protection: to the last moment it enlightened herself, and guided us. The night before she died, she called me to her bed side:—I feel, my child, said she, as the greatest bitterness of parting, the thought of leaving you to affliction and distress. I have but one consolation to receive or to bestow; a reliance on that merciful Being, who, in this hour, as in all the past, has not forsaken me! Next to that Being, you will shortly be the only remaining support of the unfortunate Roubigné —I had, of late, looked on one measure as the means of procuring his age an additional stay; but I will not prescribe your conduct, or warp your heart. I know the purity of your sentiments, the warmth of your filial affection: to those, and the guidance of Heaven —— She had spoken thus far with difficulty: her voice now failed in the attempt. My father came into the room: he sat down by me: she stretched out her hand, and joining ours, which were both laid on the bed, together, she clasped them with a feeble pressure, leaned backward, seemingly worn out with the exertion, and looked up to heaven, as if directing us thither for that assistance which her words had bequeathed us; her last words! for after that she could scarcely speak to be heard, and only uttered some broken syllables, till she lost the power of utterance altogether.

These words cannot be forgotten! they press upon my mind with the sacredness of a parent's dying instructions! but that measure they suggested—is it not against the dictates of a still superior power? I

feel the thoughts of it as of a crime. Should it be so, Maria; or do I mistake the whispers of inclination for the suggestions of conscience? Yet I think I have searched my bosom impartially, and its answer is uniform. Were it otherwise, should it ever be otherwise, what would not your Julia do, to smooth the latter days of a father, on whose gray hairs distresses are multiplied!

Methinks, since this last blow, he is greatly changed. That haughtiness of spirit, which seemed to brave, but, in reality, was irritated by misfortune, has left him. He looks calmly upon things; they affect him more, but hurt him less; his tears fall oftener, but they are less terrible than the sullen gloom which used to darken his aspect. I can now mingle mine with his, free to affliction, without uneasiness or fear; and those offices of kindness, which once my piety exacted, are now the offering of my heart.

Montauban has behaved, on this occasion, as became his character. How perfect were it, but for that weakness which regards your Julia! He came to see my father the day after that on which my mother died. I will not endeavour, said he, to stop the current of your grief: that comfort, which the world offers at times like these, flows not from feeling, and cannot be addressed to it. Your sorrow is just: I come to give you leisure to indulge it: employ me in those irksome offices, which distress us more than the tears they oblige us to dry: think nothing too mean to impose on me, that can any how relieve my friend.

And this friend his daughter is forced to deprive him of. Such at least is the common pride of the sex, that will not brook any other connexion where one is rejected. I am assailed by motives on every hand; but my own feelings are still unconquered. Support them, my ever-faithful Maria, if they are just; if not—but they cannot be unjust.

The only friend, of my own sex, whom I possessed besides thee, is now no more! We needed no additional tie; yet, methinks, in the grief of my heart, I lean upon yours with increasing affection. Thou too —I will not say pity—thou shalt love me more.

LETTER XV.

Julia to Maria.

I HAVE, this moment, received your answer to my last. Ah! my friend, it answers not as I wished. Is this frowardness in me, to hear, with pleasure, only the arguments on one side, when my conduct should be guided by those on both?

You say, it is from the absence of Savillon, that the impression he had made on my heart has gained its present strength; that the contemplation of distant objects is always stronger than the sense of present ones; and that were I to see him now, were I daily to behold him the husband of another, I should soon grow tranquil at the sight. That it is injustice to myself, and a want of that proper pride, which should be the constant attendant of our sex, to suffer this unhappy attachment to overcome my mind; and that, after looking calmly on the world, you cannot allow so much force to those impressions, as our youth was apt to suppose in them. That they are commonly vanquished by an effort to vanquish them; and that the sinking under their pressure, is one of those diseases of the mind, which, like certain diseases of the body, the exercise of its better faculties will very soon remove.

There is reason in all this; but while you argue from reason, I must decide from my feelings. In every one's own case, there is a rule of judging, which

is not the less powerful that one cannot express it.—I insist not on the memory of Savillon; I can forget him, I think I can—time will be kind that way—it is fit I should forget him—he is happy, as the husband of another.—But should I wed any man, be his worth what it may, if I feel not that lively preference for him, which waits not for reasoning to persuade its consent? The suggestions I have heard of Montauban's unwearied love, his uncommon virtues, winning my affections in a state of wedlock, I have always held a very dangerous experiment; there is equivocation in those vows, which unite us to a husband, our affection for whom we leave to contingency.—But I already esteem and admire him.—It is most true!—why is he not contented with my esteem and admiration? If those feelings are to be ripened into love, let him wait that period when my hand may be his without a blush. This I have already told him; he almost owned the injustice of his request, but pleaded the ardour of passion in excuse. Is this fair dealing, Maria? that his feelings are to be an apology for his suit, while mine are not allowed to be a reason for refusal?

I am called away by my father; I heard the count's voice below some time before. There was a solemnity in my father's manner of asking me down, which indicates something impoitant in this visit. You shall hear what that is before this letter is closed.—Again! he is come to fetch me.

Maria! let me recover my surprise! Yet why should I be surprised at the generosity of Montauban? I know the native nobleness of his soul.—Was it in such a girl as me to enfeeble it so long?

My father led me into the parlour. Montauban was standing in a pensive posture; he made me a silent bow. I was placed in a chair, standing near another

which the count had occupied before: he sat down. My father walked to the window, his back was to us. Montauban put himself once or twice into the attitude of speaking: but we were still silent.

My father turned and approached us.—The count has something to communicate, Julia. Would you choose, sir, that it should be addressed to her alone? No, answered he, it is an expiation to both, and both should hear it made. I fear, I have unwillingly been the cause of disquiet to a family, whose society, for some time past, has been one of the chief sweeteners of my life. They know my gratitude, for the blessing of that intimacy they were kind enough to allow me. When I wished for a more tender connexion, they could not blame my wish; but, when I pressed it so far as to wound their peace, I was unworthy of the esteem they had formerly given, an esteem I cannot now bear to lose. When I cease my suit, Miss Julia, let it speak, not a diminution, but an increase of my affection. If that regard, which you often had the generosity to confess for me, was impaired by my addresses, let me recover it by this sacrifice of my hopes; and, while I devote to your quiet the solicitations of my love, let it confirm to me every privilege of the most sacred friendship.

Such were the words of Montauban. I know not what answer I made: I remember a movement of admiration, and no more. At that instant, he seemed nobler than ever; and when, in spite of his firmness, a tear broke forth, my pity almost carried me beyond esteem. How happy might this man make another! Julia de Roubigné is fated to be miserable!

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LETTER XVI.

The Count de Montauban to Mons. Duvergne at Paris.

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I HAVE sent only three of the bills I proposed, in my last, to remit: that for five thousand, and the other for twelve thousand livres, at short dates, I have retained, as, I believe, I shall have use for them here. You may discount some of the others, if you want money for immediate use, which, however, I imagine, will not be the case.

I beg you may, immediately on receipt of this, send the inclosed letter as directed. The name in the superscription I have made Vervette, though my steward, from whom I take it, is not sure if it be exactly that; but as he tells me the man is a procureur of some practice, and is certain as to the place of his residence, I imagine you will have no difficulty in finding him. I wish my letter to reach him in Paris; but if you hear that he has gone into the country, send me notice by the messenger, who is to fetch down my uncle's papers, by whom I shall receive your answer sooner than by post.

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LETTER XVII.

Lisette to Maria.

MADAM,

I MAKE bold to write this, in great haste, because I am sensible of your friendship for my lady, and that you will thank me for giving you an opportunity of trying to serve her father and her in their present di-

stress. She, poor lady, is in such a situation as not to be able to write: and besides, she is so noble-minded, that I dare be sworn she would not tell you the worst, lest it should look like asking your assistance.

How shall I tell you, madam? My poor master is in danger of being forced away from us, and thrown into prison. A debt, it seems, owing to some people in Paris, on account of expenses about that unfortunate lawsuit, has been put into the hands of a procureur, who will not hear of any delay in the payment of it; and he was here this morning, and told my master, as Le Blanc overheard, that, if he could not procure the money in three hours time, he must attend him to a jail. My master wished to conceal this from his daughter, and desired the procureur to do his duty without any noise or disturbance; but Le Blanc had scarcely gone up stairs, when she called him, and inquired about that man's business; and he could not hide it, his heart was so full; and so he told her all that had passed below. Then she flew down to her father's room, and hung about him in such a manner, weeping and sobbing, that it would have melted the heart of a savage, and so, to be sure, I said to the procureur; but he did not mind me a bit, nor my lady neither, though she looked so as I never beheld in all my life, and I was terrified to see her so, and said all I could to comfort her, but to no purpose. At last, a servant of the procureur brought him a letter, and presently he went out of the house, but left two of his attendants to watch that my master should not escape; and they are now here, and they say that he cannot grant any respite; but that, as sure as can be, when he returns, he will take away Mons. de Roubigné to prison. I send this by a boy, a nephew of Le Blanc's, who serves a gentleman in this province, who is just now going post to Paris, and the boy called on his way,

by good fortune, to see his uncle. I am, in haste, your very faithful and obedient servant,

LISETTE.

My lady is much more composed now, and so is my master. The procureur has not returned yet, and I have a sort of hope; yet God knows whence it should be, except from your ladyship.

LETTER XVIII.

Lisette to Maria.

To be sure, madam, you must have been much affected with the distress in our family, of which I informed you in my last, considering what a friendship there is between my dear lady and you. And now I am much vexed, that I should have given you so much uneasiness in vain, and send this to let you know of the happy deliverance my master has met with, from that most generous of men the Count de Montauban; I say, the most generous of men, as to be sure he is, to advance so large a sum without any near prospect of being repaid, and without ever being asked to do such a favour; for I verily believe my master would die before he would ask such a favour of any one, so high-minded he is, notwithstanding all his misfortunes. He is just now gone to see the count, for that noble-hearted gentleman would not come to our house, lest, as Mons. de Roubigné said, he should seem to triumph in the effects of his own generosity. Indeed, the thing was done as if it had been by witchcraft, without one of this family suspecting such a matter; and the procureur never came back at all, only sent a paper, discharging the debt, to one of the men he had left

behind, who, upon that, behaved very civilly, and went away with much better manners, forsooth, than they came; but Le Blanc followed them to the village, where they met the procureur, and thus it was that we discovered the debt to have been paid by the count, who, it seems, had sent that letter, but without a name, which the procureur received, when he left us at the time I wrote your ladyship last.

Mons. de Roubigné is returned from his visit to the Count de Montauban, and has been a long time closeted with my lady, and, to be sure, someth ng particular must have passed, but what it is I cannot guess; only I am certain it is something more than common, because I was in the way when they parted, and my lady passed me, and I saw by her looks that there had been something. When she went into her own chamber I followed her, and there she sat down, leaning her arm on her dressing-table, and gave such a sigh, as I thought her heart would have burst with it. Then I thought I might speak, and asked if she was not well. Very well, Lisette, said she; but she said it as if she was not well for all that, breathing strongly as she spoke the words, as one does when one has run one's self out of breath. Leave me, child, said she, I will call you again by and by. And so I left her as she bid me; and as I went out of the room, shutting the door softly behind me, I heard her start up from her chair, and say to herself, "The lot is cast!" I think that was it.

My master has been all this while in his study, writing, and just now he called Le Blanc, and gave him a letter for the Count de Montauban; and Le Blanc told me, as he passed, that Mons. de Roubigné looked gayer, and more in spirits than usual, when he

gave it him. My lady is still in her chamber alone, and has never called me, as she promised. Poor dear soul! I am sure I would do any thing to serve her, that I would; and well I may, for she is the kindest, sweetest lady to me, and so indeed she is to every body.

And now, madam, I am sure I should ask a thousand pardons for using the freedom to write to you in such a manner, just by starts, as things happen. But I am sensible your ladyship will not impute my doing so to any want of respect, but only to my desire of giving your ladyship an accocnt of the situation of my lady, and of this family, which you were so condescending as to say, after my first letter, you were much obliged to me for giving you, and begged that it might be in my own style, which, to be sure, is none of the best; but which your ladyship will be so good as pardon, especially as I am, when I write to you about these matters, in a flutter, as one may say, as well as having little time to order my expressions for the best. I am, honoured Madam,

With due respect,
Your faithful
and obedient servant,
LISETTE.

LETTER XIX.

Julia to Maria.

In the intricacies of my fate, or of my conduct, I have long been accustomed to consider you my support and my judge. For some days past these have come thick upon me; but I could not find composure enough to state them coolly even to myself. At this hour of mid-

night, I have summoned up a still recollection of the past; and with you, as my other conscience, I will unfold and examine it.

The ready zeal of my faithful Lisette has, I understand, saved me a recital of the distress in which my father found himself involved, from the consequences of that lawsuit we have so often lamented. I could only share it with him; but a more effectual friend stepped forth in the Count de Montauban. His generosity relieved my father, and gave him back to freedom and your Julia.

The manner of his doing this, was such as the delicacy of a mind jealous of its own honour would prompt in the cause of another's. I thought I saw a circumstance, previous to the count's performing it, which added to that delicacy. My father did not then perceive this; it was not till he waited on Montauban that the force of it struck his mind.

When he returned home, I saw some remains of that pride, which formerly rankled under the receipt of favours it was unable to return. My Julia, said he, your father is unhappy, every way unhappy; but it is fit I should be humble—Pierre de Roubigné must learn humility! He uttered these words in a tone that frightened me; I could not speak. He saw me confused, I believe, and, putting on a milder aspect, took my hand and kissed it.—Heaven knows, that, for myself, I rate not life or liberty at much;—but, when I thought what my child must suffer—I alone am left to protect her—and I am old and weak, and must ask for that assistance which I am unable to repay.—The generous, sir, said I, know from their own hearts what yours can feel; all beyond is accident alone. The generous, indeed, my child! but you know not all the generosity of Montauban. When he tore himself from those hopes which his love had taught him; when he renounced his pretensions to that hand,

which I know can alone confer happiness on his life; it was but for a more delicate opportunity of relieving thy father.—I could not, said he, while I sought your daughter's love, bear the appearance of purchasing it by a favour; now, when I have renounced it for ever, I am free to the offices of friendship.—Had you seen him, Julia, when he pronounced this *for ever!* great as his soul is, he wept! by Heaven, he wept, at pronouncing it!—These tears, Julia, these tears of my friend!—Would I had met my dungeon in silence;—they had not torn my heart thus!

Maria, mine was swelled to a sort of enthusiastic madness—

I fell at his feet.—

No, my father, they shall not.—Amidst the fall of her family, your daughter shall not stand aloof in safety. She should have shared the prison of her father in the pride of adversity; behold her now the partner of his humiliation! Tell the Count de Montauban, that Julia de Roubigné offers that hand to his generosity, which she refused to his solicitation:—tell him also, she is above deceit: she will not conceal the small value of the gift. 'Tis but the offering of a wretch, who would somehow requite the sufferings of her father, and the services of his friend. If he shall now reject it, that ugly debt, which his unhappiness lays us under, will be repaid in the debasement she endures; if he accepts of it as it is, tell him its mistress is not ignorant of the duty that should attend it.

My father seemed to recover at my words; yet surprise was mixed with the satisfaction his countenance expressed. Are these your sentiments, my love? pressing my hand closer in his.—The heroism of duty was wasted.—I answered him with my tears. Speak, my Julia, coolly! and let not the distresses of your father warp your resolution. He can endure any thing, even his gratitude shall be silenced.—My forti-

tude revived again.——There is some weakness, sir, attends even our best resolves: mine are not without it; but they are fixed, and I have spoken them. He asked, If he might acquaint Mons. de Montauban. Immediately, sir, I answered, if you please; the sooner he knows my resolution, the more will he see it flowing from my heart. My father went into his study, and wrote a letter, which he read to me. It was not all I could have wished, yet I could not mend it by correction. Who shall give words to the soul at such a time? My very thoughts are not accurate expressions of what I feel; there is something busy about my heart, which I cannot reduce into thinking.—Oh! Maria!

Montauban came immediately on receipt of this letter: we did not expect him that night; we were at supper. In what a situation was your Julia while it lasted! In this terrible interval, I was obliged to meet his eye sometimes, in addressing ordinary civilities to him. To see him, to speak to him thus, while the fate of my life was within the power of a few little words, was such torture as it required the utmost of my resolution to bear. My father saw it, and put as speedy an end to our meal as possible.—We were left alone.

My father spoke first, not without hesitation. Montauban was still more confused; but it was the confusion of a happy man. He spoke some half sentences about the delicacy of my sentiments and his own; but was entangled there, and, I think, not able to extricate himself. At last, turning fuller towards me, who sat the silent victim of the scene (why should I score through that word when writing to you? yet it is a bad one, and I pray you to forgive it), he said, He knew his own unworthiness of that hand, which my generosity had now allowed him to hope for; but that every endeavour of his future life—the rest was common-place;

for his sex have but one sort of expression for the exulting modesty of success.—My father put my hand in his—I was obliged to raise my eyes from the ground and look on him; his were bent earnestly on me: there was too, too much joy in them, Maria; mine could not bear them long. That hand, said my father, is the last treasure of Roubigné. Fallen as his fortunes are, not the wealth of worlds had purchased it: to your friendship, to your virtue, he is blessed in bequeathing it.—I know its value, said the count, and receive it as the dearest gift of Heaven and you. He kissed my hand with rapture.——

It is done, and I am Montauban's for ever!——

LETTER XX.

Montauban to Segarva.

Give me joy, Segarva, give me joy—the lovely Julia is mine. Let not the torpid considerations of prudence, which your last letter contained, rise up to check the happiness of your friend, or that which his good fortune will bestow on you. Trust me, thy fears are groundless—didst thou but know her as I do!—Perhaps, I am more tender that way than usual; but there were some of your fears I felt a blush in reading. Talk not of the looseness of marriage-vows in France, nor compare her with those women of it, whose heads are giddy with the follies of fashion, and whose hearts are debauched by the manners of its votaries. Her virtue was ever above the breath of suspicion, and I dare pledge my life, it will ever continue so. But that is not enough; I can feel, as you do, that it is not enough. I know the nobleness of her soul, the delicacy of her sentiments. She would not give me her hand, except from motives of regard and affection, were I master of millions. I rejoice that her own

situation is such, as infers no suspicion of interestedness in me; were she not Julia de Roubigné, I would not have wedded her with the world for her dower.

You talk of her former reluctance; but I am not young enough to imagine that it is impossible for a marriage to be happy without that glow of rapture, which lovers have felt, and poets described. Those starts of passion are not the basis for wedded felicity, which wisdom would choose, because they are only the delirium of a month, which possession destroys, and disappointment follows. I have perfect confidence in the affection of Julia, though it is not of that intemperate kind which some brides have shown. Had you seen her eyes, how they spoke, when her father gave me her hand! there was still reluctance in them, a reluctance more willing than all the flush of consent could have made her. Modesty and fear, esteem and gratitude, darkened and enlightened them by turns; and those tears, those silent tears, which they shed, gave me a more sacred bond of her attachment, than it was in the power of words to have formed.

I have sometimes allowed myself to think, or rather I have supposed you thinking, it might be held an imputation on the purity of her affection, that from an act of generosity towards her father (with the circumstances of which I was under the necessity of acquainting you in my last), her hand became rather a debt of gratitude than a gift of love. But there is a deception in those romantic sounds, which tell us, that pure affection should be unbiassed in its disposal of a lover or a mistress. If they say that affection is a mere involuntary impulse, waiting neither the decisions of reason nor the dissuasives of prudence, do they not in reality degrade us to machines, which are blindly actuated by some uncontrollable power? If they allow a woman reasonable motives for her attachment, what can be stronger than those sentiments which excite

her esteem, and those proofs of them which produce her gratitude?

But why do I thus reason on my happiness? I feel no fears, no suspicion of alloy to it; and I will not search for them in abstract opinion, or in distant conjecture.

Tuesday next is fixed for the day that is to unite us; the show and ceremony that mingle so ill with the feelings of a time like this, our situation here renders unnecessary. A few of those simple ornaments, in which my Julia meets the gaze of the admiring rustics around us, are more congenial to her beauty than all the trappings of vanity or magnificence. We propose passing a week or two here, before removing to Montauban, whither I must then carry my wife, to show my people their mistress, and receive that sort of homage, which I hope I have taught them to pay from the heart. Those relations of my family, who live in that neighbourhood, must come and learn to love me better than they did. Methinks I shall now be more easily pleased with them than I formerly was. I know not if it is nobler to despise insignificant people, than to bear with them coolly; but I believe it is much less agreeable. The asperities of our own mind recoil on itself. Julia has shown me the bliss of losing them.

Could I hope for my Segarva at Montauban?—Much as I dote on my lovely bride, there wants the last approval of my soul, till he smiles on this marriage, and blesses it. I know, there needs only his coming thither to grant this.—I anticipate your answer, that now it is impossible; but let it be a debt on the future, which *the first* of your leisure is to pay. Meantime believe me happy, and add to my happiness by telling me of your own.

LETTER XXI.

Julia to Maria.

WHY should I tease you by writing of those little things which tease me in the doing? They tease, yet perhaps they are useful. At this time I am afraid of a moment's leisure to be idle, and am even pleased with the happy impertinence of Lisette, whose joy, on my account, gives her tongue much freedom. I call her often, when I have little occasion for her service, merely that I may have her protection from solitude.

For the same reason I am somehow afraid of writing to you, which is only another sort of thinking. Do not therefore expect to hear from me again till after Tuesday at soonest.—Maria! you remember our fancy at school of showing our friendship, by setting down remarkable days of one another's little joys and disappointments.—Set down Tuesday next for your Julia—but leave its property blank.—Fate will fill it up one day!

LETTER XXII.

Lisette to Maria.

MADAM,

I HOPE my lady and you will both excuse my writing this, to give you notice of the happy event which has happened in our family. I made so bold as to ask her if she intended writing to you. Lisette, said she, I cannot write, I cannot indeed. So I have taken up the pen, who am a poor unworthy correspondent; but your ladyship's goodness has made allowances for me in that way before, and, I hope, will do so still.

The ceremony was performed yesterday. I think I never saw a more lovely figure than my lady's; she is a sweet angel at all times, but I wish your ladyship had seen how she looked then. She was dressed in a white muslin night-gown, with striped lilac-and-white ribands: her hair was kept in the loose way you used to make me dress it for her at Belville, with two waving curls down one side of her neck, and a braid of little pearls—you made her a present of them. And to be sure, with her dark-brown locks resting upon it, her bosom looked as pure white as the driven snow.—And then her eyes, when she gave her hand to the count! they were cast half down, and you might see her eye-lashes, like strokes of a pencil, over the white of her skin—the modest gentleness, with a sort of a sadness too, as it were, and a gentle heave of her bosom at the same time.—O! madam, you know I have not language, as my lady and you have, to describe such things; but it made me cry, in truth it did, for very joy and admiration. There was a tear in my master's eye too, though I believe two happier hearts were not in France, than his and the Count de Montauban's. I am sure I pray for blessings on all three, with more earnestness, that I do, than for myself.

It seems, it is settled that the new-married couple shall not remain long here, but set out, in a week or two hence, for the count's principal seat, about six leagues distant from his house in our neighbourhood, which is not large enough for entertaining the friends whose visits they must receive on this joyful occasion. I fancy Mons. de Roubigné will be much with them, though, I understand, he did not choose to accept of the count's pressing invitation to live with his daughter and him; but an elderly lady, a relation of my dear mistress that is gone, is to keep house for him.

I must break off now, for I hear my lady's bell ring, and your ladyship may believe we are all in a sort of

buz here. I dare to say she will not fail to write to you soon; but meantime, hoping you will accept of this poor scrawling letter of mine, I remain, with due respect,

Your most faithful and obedient servant,

LISETTE.

P. S. My lady is to have me with her at the Chateau de Montauban; and to be sure, I am happy to attend her, as I could willingly spend all the days of my life with so kind a lady, and so good conditioned. The count likewise has been so good to me, as I can't tell how, and said, that he hoped my mistress and I would never part, if she does not grow jealous, said he merrily, of so handsome a maid. And at that we all laughed, as to be sure we might. My lady will be a happy lady, I am sure.

LETTER XXIII.

Julia to Maria.

My friend will, by this time, be chiding me for want of attention to her; yet, in truth, she has seldom been absent from my thoughts. Were we together but for a single hour, I should have much to tell you; but there is an intricacy in my feelings on this change of situation, which, freely as I write to you, I cannot manage on paper. I can easily imagine what you would first desire to know, though perhaps it is the last question you would put. The *happiness* of your Julia, I know, is ever the warmest object of your wishes.—Ask me not, why I cannot answer even this directly.—Be satisfied when I tell you, that I ought to be happy.—Montauban has every desire to make me so.—

One thing I wish to accomplish towards his peace and mine. The history of this poor heart I have intrusted only to your memory and my own: I will endeavour, though I know with how much difficulty, henceforth to forget it for ever. You must assist me, by holding it a blank, which recollection is no more to fill up. I know the weakness of my sex; myself of that sex the weakest: I will not run the risk of calling up ideas, which were once familiar, and may not now be the less dangerous, nor the less readily listened to, for the pain they have caused. My husband has now a right to every better thought; it were unjust to embitter those hours which are but half the property of Julia de Montauban, with the remembrance of former ones, which belonged to sadness and Julia de Roubigné.

We are on the eve of our departure for the family-castle of Mons. de Montauban. My father, whose happiness, at present, is a flattering testimony, as well as a support to my piety, accompanies us thither, but is soon to return home, where our cousin, La Pelliere, whom you may remember having seen with my mother in Paris, is to keep house for him. This separation I cannot help looking to as a calamity; yet, I believe, his reasons for it are just. What a change in a woman's situation does this momentous connexion make!—I will think no more of it.—Farewell.

Yet a few words, to own my folly at least, if I cannot amend it. I went to assort some little articles of dress for carrying home with me: while I was rummaging out a drawer to find one of them, a little picture of Savillon, drawn for him when a boy, by a painter who was accidentally in our neighbourhood, crossed me in the way. You cannot easily imagine how this circumstance disconcerted me. I shut the drawer as if it had contained a viper; then opened it

again; and again the countenance of Savillon, mild and thoughtful (for even then it was thoughtful), met my view!—Was it a consciousness of *guilt* that turned my eye involuntarily to the door of the apartment?—Can there be any in accidentally thinking of Savillon?—Yet I fear I looked too long and too impassionedly on this miniature. It was drawn with something sorrowful in the countenance, and methought it looked then more sorrowful than ever.

The question comes strong upon me, how I should like that my husband had seen this.—In truth, Maria, I fear my keeping this picture is improper; yet at the time it was painted, there was one drawn for me by the same hand, and we exchanged resemblances without any idea of impropriety. Ye unfeeling decorums of the world!—Yet it is dangerous, is it not, my best monitor, to think thus?—Yet, were I to return the picture, would it not look like a suspicion of myself?—I will keep it, till you convince me I should not.

Montauban and virtue! I am yours. Suffer but one sigh to that weakness, which I have not yet been able to overcome. My heart, I trust, is innocent—blame it not for being unhappy.

LETTER XXIV.

Julia to Maria.

My father was with me this morning, in my chamber, for more than an hour. We sat, sometimes silent, sometimes speaking interrupted sentences, and tears were frequently all the intercourse we held. Lisette coming in, to acquaint us that Montauban was in the parlour waiting us, at length put an end to our interview. Julia, said my father, I imagined I had much to say to you; but the importance of my thoughts, on

your behalf, stifles my expression of them. There are moments when I cannot help looking to that separation, which your marriage will make between us, as if it were the loss of my child; yet I have fortitude enough to resist the impression, and to reflect that she is going to be happy with the worthiest of men. My instruction for your conduct in that state you have just entered into, your own sentiments, I trust, would render unnecessary, were they in no other way supplied; but I discovered lately, in your mother's bureau, a paper which still further supersedes their necessity. It contains some advices, which experience and observation had enabled her to give, and her regard for you had prompted her to write down. 'Tis, however, only a fragment, which accident or diffidence of herself has prevented her completing; but it is worthy of your serious perusal, and you will read it with more warmth than if it came from a general instructor. He left the paper with me; I have read it with the care, with the affection it deserves; I send a copy of it now, as I would every good thing, for the participation of my friend. She cannot read it with the interest of a daughter; but she will find it no cold, no common lecture. It speaks, if I am not too partial to the best of mothers, the language of prudence, but not of artifice; it would mend the heart by sentiment, not cover it with dissimulation. She, for whose use it was written, has need of such a monitor, and would listen to no other; if she has paid any debt to prudence, it was not from the obligation of wisdom, but the impulse of feeling.

For my Daughter Julia.

Before this can reach you, the hand that writes it, and the heart that dictates, will be mouldering in the grave. I mean it to supply the place of some cau-

tions, which I should think it my duty to deliver to you, should I live to see you a wife. The precepts it contains, you have often heard me inculcate; but I know that general observations on a possible event, have much less force than those which apply to our immediate condition. In the fate of a woman, marriage is the most important crisis: it fixes her in a state, of all others the most happy, or the most wretched; and though mere precept can perhaps do little in any case, yet there is a natural propensity to try its efficacy in all. She who writes this paper, has been long a wife, and a mother; the experience of one, and the anxiety of the other, prompt her instructions; and she has been too happpy in both characters to have much doubt of their truth, or fear of their reception.

Sweetness of temper, affection to a husband, and attention to his interests, constitute the duties of a wife, and form the basis of matrimonial felicity. These are indeed the texts from which every rule for attaining this felicity is drawn. The charms of beauty, and the brilliancy of wit, though they may captivate in the mistress, will not long delight in the wife: they will shorten even their own transitory reign, if, as I have seen in many wives, they shine more for the attraction of every body else than of their husbands. Let the pleasing of that one person be a thought never absent from your conduct. If he loves you as you would wish he should, he will bleed at heart should he suppose it for a moment withdrawn: if he does not, his pride will supply the place of love, and his resentment that of suffering.

Never consider a trifle what may tend to please him. The great articles of duty he will set down as his own; but the lesser attentions he will mark as favours; and trust me, for I have experienced it, there is no feeling more delightful to one's self, than that of turning those little things to so precious a use.

If you marry a man of a certain sort, such as the romance of young minds generally paints for a husband, you will deride the supposition of any possible decrease in the ardour of your affections. But wedlock, even in its happiest lot, is not exempted from the common fate of all sublunary blessings; there is ever a delusion in hope, which cannot abide with possession. The rapture of extravagant love will evaporate and waste; the conduct of the wife must substitute in its room other regards, as delicate, and more lasting. I say, the conduct of the wife; for marriage, be a husband what he may, reverses the prerogative of sex; his will expect to be pleased, and ours must be sedulous to please.

This privilege a good-natured man may waive: he will feel it, however, due; and third persons will have penetration enough to see, and may have malice enough to remark, the want of it in his wife. He must be a husband unworthy of you, who could bear the degradation of suffering this in silence. The idea of power on either side, should be totally banished from the system: it is not sufficient, that the husband should never have occasion to regret the want of it; the wife must so behave, that he may never be conscious of possessing it.

But my Julia, if a mother's fondness deceives me not, stands not much in need of cautions like these. I cannot allow myself the idea of her wedding a man, on whom she would not wish to be dependent, or whose inclinations a temper like hers would desire to control. She will be more in danger from that softness, that sensibility of soul, which will yield perhaps too much for the happiness of both. The office of a wife includes the exertion of a friend: a good one must frequently strengthen and support that weakness, which a bad one would endeavour to overcome. There are situations, where it will not be enough to love, to

cherish, to obey: she must teach her husband to be at peace with himself, to be reconciled to the world, to resist misfortune, to conquer adversity.

Alas! my child, I am here an instructress but too well skilled! These tears, with which this paper is soiled, fell not in the presence of your father, though, now, they but trace the remembrance of what then it was my lot to feel. Think it not impossible to restrain your feelings because they are strong. The enthusiasm of feeling will sometimes overcome distresses, which the cold heart of prudence had been unable to endure.

But *misfortune* is not always *misery*. I have known this truth; I am proud to believe that I have sometimes taught it to Roubigné. Thanks be to that Power, whose decrees I reverence! he often tempered the anguish of our sufferings, till there was a sort of luxury in feeling them. Then is the triumph of wedded love!—the tie that binds the happy may be dear; but that which links the unfortunate is tenderness unutterable.

There are afflictions less easy to be endured, which your mother has not experienced: those which a husband inflicts, and the best wives feel the most severely. These, like all our sharpest calamities, the fortitude that can resist, can only cure. Complainings debase her who suffers, and harden him who aggrieves. Let not a woman always look for their cause in the injustice of her lord; they may proceed from many trifling errors in her own conduct, which virtue cannot blame, though wisdom must regret. If she makes this discovery, let them be amended without a thought if possible, at any rate without an expression, of merit in amending them. In this, and in every other instance, it must never be forgotten, that the only government allowed on our side, is that of gentleness and attrac-

tion; and that its power, like the fabled influence of imaginary beings, must be invisible to be complete.

Above all, let a wife beware of communicating to others any want of duty or tenderness she may think she has perceived in her husband. This untwists, at once, those delicate cords which preserve the unity of the marriage-engagement. Its sacredness is broken for ever, if third parties are made witnesses of its failings, or umpires of its disputes. It may seem almost profane in me to confess, that once, when, through the malice of an enemy, I was made, for a short time, to believe that my Roubigné had wronged me, I durst not, even in my prayers to Heaven, petition for a restoration of his love; I prayed to be made a better wife: when I would have said a more beloved one, my utterance failed me for the word.

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LETTER XXV.

Julia to Maria.

We have got to the end of our journey; and I am now the mistress of this mansion. Our journey was too short and too slow; I wished for some mechanical relief from my feelings in the rapidity of a post-chaise; our progress was too stately to be expeditious, and we reached not this place, though but six leagues distant, till the evening.

Methinks I have suffered a good deal; but my heart is not callous yet; else wherefore was it wrung so, at leaving my father's peaceful retreat? I did not trust myself with looking back; but I was too well acquainted with the objects, not to recollect every tree from the side-window as we passed. A little ragged boy, who

keeps some sheep of my father's, opened the gate for us at the end of the furthermost inclosure; he pulled off his hat, which he had adorned with some gay-coloured ribands in honour of the occasion; Montauban threw money into it, and the boy followed us, for some time, with a number of blessings. When he turned back, methought I envied him his return. The full picture of the place we had left, rose before me; it needed all my resolution, and all my fears of offending, to prevent my weeping outright. At our dinner on the road, I was very busy, and affected to be very much pleased; La Pelliere was a lucky companion for me; you know how full she is of observation on trifles. When we approached the house, she spoke of every thing, and praised every thing; I had nothing to do but to assent.

We entered between two rows of lime-trees, at the end of which is the gate of the house, wide and rudely magnificent; its large leaves were opened to receive us, by an old but fresh-looking servant, who seemed too honest to be polite, and did not show me quite so much courtesy as some mistresses would have expected. All these circumstances, however, were in a style which my friend has heard me commend; yet was I weak enough, not perfectly to relish them when they happened to myself. There was a presaging gloom about this mansion which filled my approach with terror; and when Montauban's old domestic opened the coach-door, I looked upon him as a criminal might do on the messenger of death. My dreams ever since have been full of horror; and while I write these lines, the creaking of the pendulum of the great clock in the hall, sounds like the knell of your devoted Julia.

I expect you to rally me on my ideal terrors.—You may remember, when we used to steal a midnight hour's conversation together, you would laugh at my foreboding of a short period to my life, and often jeer-

ingly tell me, I was born to be a great grandmother in my time. I know the foolishness of this impression, though I have not yet been able to conquer it. But to me it is not the source of disquiet; I never feel more possessed of myself than at those moments when I indulge it the most. Why should I wish for long life? why should so many wish for it? Did we sit down to number the calamities of this world; did we think how many wretches there are of disease, of poverty, of oppression, of vice (alas! I fear there are some even of virtue), we should change one idea of evil, and learn to look on death as a friend.

This might a philosopher accomplish; but a Christian, Maria, can do more. Religion has taught me to look beyond dissolution. Religion has removed the darkness that covered the sepulchres of our fathers, and filled that gloomy void, which was only the retreat of hopeless affliction, with prospects, in contemplation of which, even the felicity of the world dwindles into nothing!

ADVERTISEMENT.

MY readers will easily perceive something particular in the place where the following letters of Savillon *are found, as they are manifestly of a date considerably prior to many of the preceding. They came to my hands, assorted in the manner I have now published them, probably from a view in my young friend, who had the charge of their arrangement, of keeping the correspondence of Julia, which communicated the great train of her feelings on the subjects contained in them, as much undivided as possible. While I conjectured this reason for their present order, I was aware of some advantage, which these papers, as relating a story, might derive from an alteration in that particular; but, after balancing those different considerations, without coming to any decision, my indolence (perhaps a stronger motive with most men than they are disposed to allow) at length prevailed, and I resolved to give them to the public in the order they were transmitted to me from France. Many of the particulars they recount are anticipated by a perusal of the foregoing letters; but it is not so much on story, as sentiment, that their interest with the reader must depend.*

LETTER XXVI.

Savillon to Beauvaris.

After a very unfavourable passage, we are at last arrived at our destined port. A ship is lying along-side of us, ready to sail for France, and every one on board, who can write, is now writing, to some relation or friend, the hardships of his voyage, and the period of his arrival. How few has Savillon to greet with tidings! To Roubigné I have already written; to Beauvaris I am now writing; and, when I have excepted these, there is not in France a single man to whom I am entitled to write. Yet I mean not to class them together: to Roubigné I owe the tribute of esteem, the debt of gratitude; for you I feel something tenderer than either. Roubigné has been the guide, the father, of my youth, and him I reverence as a parent: you have been the friend, the brother, of my soul, and with yours it mingles as with a part of itself.

You remember the circumstances of our parting. You would not bid me adieu till the ship was getting under way: I believe you judged aright, if you meant to spare us both: the bustle of the scene, the rattling of the sails, the noise of the sailors, had a mechanical effect on the mind, and stifled those tender feelings which we indulge in solitude and silence. When I went to bed, I had time to indulge them. I found it vain to attempt sleeping, and scarcely wished to succeed in attempting it. About midnight I arose, and went upon deck. The wind had been fair all day, and we were then, I suppose, more than thirty leagues from the shore. I looked on the arch of heaven, where the moon pursued her course unclouded; and my ear caught no sound, except the stilly noise of the sea around me. I thought of my distance from France

as of some illusive dream, and could not believe, without an effort, that it was not four-and-twenty hours since we parted. I recollected a thousand things which I should have said to you, and spoke them involuntarily in the ear of night.

There was, my friend, there was one thing which I meant to have told you at parting. Had you staid a few moments longer in the room after the seamen called us, I should have spoken it then; but you shunned being alone with me, and I could not command even words enough to tell you, that I wished to speak with you in private. Hear it now, and pity your Savillon.

Julia de Roubigné!—Did you feel that name as I do?—Even traced with my own pen, what throbbing remembrances has it raised!—You are acquainted with my obligations to her father: you have heard me sometimes talk of her; but you know not, for I tremble to tell you, the power she has acquired over the heart of your friend.

The fate of my father, as well as mutual inclination, made Roubigné his friend; for this last is of a temper formed rather to delight in the pride of assisting unfortunate worth, than in the joy of knowing it in a better situation. After the death of my father, I became the ward of his friend's generosity: a state I should have brooked but ill, had not Julia been his daughter. From those early days, when first I knew her, I remember her friendship as making part of my existence: without her, pleasure was vapid, and sorrow, in her society, was changed into enjoyment. At that time of life, the mind has little reserve. We meant but friendship, and called it so without alarm. The love, to which at length I discovered my heart to be subject, had conquered without tumult, and become despotic under the semblance of freedom.

The misfortunes of her family first showed me how

I loved.—When her father told them the ruined state of his fortune, when he prepared them for leaving the now alienated seat of his ancestors, I was a spectator of the scene. When I saw the old man, with indignant pride, stifling the anguish of his heart, and pointing to the chaise that was to carry them from Belville, his wife, with one hand clasping her husband's, the other laid on her bosom, turning up to heaven a look of resignation; his daughter, striving to check her tears, kneeling before him, and vowing her duty to his misfortunes; then did I first curse my poverty, which prevented me from throwing myself at her feet, and bidding her parents be happy with their Julia!—The luxury of the idea still rushes on my mind;—to heal the fortunes of my father's friend; to justify the ways of Heaven to his saint-like wife; to wipe the tears from the eyes of his angel daughter!—Beauvaris, our philosophy is false: power and wealth are the choicest gifts of Heaven; to possess them, indeed, is nothing, but thus to use them, is rapture!

I had them not thus to use; but what I could, I did. I attended his family to that ancient mansion, which was now the sole property of the once opulent Roubigné. With unwearied attention I soothed his sorrows, and humbled myself before his misfortunes, as much as I had formerly resisted dependence on his prosperity.

He felt the assiduity of my friendship, and I saw him grateful for its exertion; yet would the idea of being obliged, often rankle in his mind; and I have seen him frequently look at me with an appearance of anger, when he thought I was conscious of obliging him.

Far different was the gentle nature of his daughter. She thanked me with unfeigned gratitude for my services to her father, and seemed solicitous to compensate with her smiles, for that want of acknowledgement she observed in him.

Had my heart been free before, it was impossible to preserve its freedom now. A spectator of all those excellences which, though she ever possessed, her present situation alone could give full room to exert; all that sublimity of mind, which bore adversity unmoved; all that gentleness, which contrived to lighten it to her father, and smooth the rankling of his haughty soul! I applauded the election I had made, and looked on my love as a virtue.

Yet there were moments of anxiety, in which I feared the consequences of indulging this attachment. My own situation, the situation of Julia, the pride of her father, the pride which it was proper for herself to feel: all these were present to my view, and showed me how little I could build on hope; yet it cheated me, I know not how, and I dreamed, from day to day, of blessings, which every day's reflection told me were not to be looked for.

There was indeed something in the scene around us, formed to create those romantic illusions. The retreat of Roubigné is a venerable pile, the remains of ancient Gothic magnificence, and the grounds adjoining to it are in that style of melancholy grandeur which marks the dwellings of our forefathers. One part of that small estate, which is still the appendage of this once respectable mansion, is a wild and rocky dell, where tasteless wealth has never warred on nature, nor even elegance refined or embellished her beauties. The walks are only worn by the tread of the shepherds, and the banks only smoothed by the feeding of their flocks. There, too dangerous society! have I passed whole days with Julia: there, more dangerous still! have I passed whole days in thinking of her.

A circumstance trifling in itself added not a little to the fascination of the rest. The same good woman who nursed me, was also the nurse of Julia. She was

too fond of her foster-daughter, and too well treated by her, ever to leave the fortunes of her family. To this residence she attended them when they left Belville; and here too, as at that place, had a small house and garden allotted her. It was situated at the extreme verge of that dell I have described, and was often the end of those walks we took through it together. The good Lasune, for that is our nurse's name, considered us her children, and treated us, in those visits to her little dwelling, with that simplicity of affection which has the most powerful effect on hearts of sensibility. Oh! Beauvaris! methinks I see the figure of Lasune, at this moment, pointing out to your friend, with rapture in her countenance, the beauties of her lovely daughter! She places our seats together; she produces her shining platters, with fruit and milk, for our repast; she presses the smiling Julia, and will not be denied by Savillon!—Am I then a thousand leagues distant!

Does Julia remember Savillon?—Should I hope that she does?—My friend, I will confess my weakness; perhaps, it is worse than weakness; I have wished—I have hoped, that I am not indifferent to her. Often have I been on the point of unloading my throbbing heart, of telling her how passionately I loved, of asking her forgiveness for my presumption. I have thought, perhaps it was vanity, that at some seasons she might have answered and blessed me; but I saw the consequences which would follow to both, and had fortitude enough to resist the impulse.—A time may come, when better fortune shall entitle me to speak; when the pride of Roubigné may not blush to look on Savillon as his son.

But this is the language of visionary hope! In the mean time I am torn from her, from France, from every connexion my heart had formed; cast, like a shipwrecked thing, on the other side of the Atlantic,

amidst a desert, of all others the most dreadful, the desert of society, with which no social tie unites me! —Where now are Roubigné's little copses, where his winding walks, his nameless rivulets? where the ivied gate of his venerable dwelling, the Gothic windows of his echoing hall?—That morning on which I set out for Paris is still fresh on my memory. I could not bear the formality of parting, and stole from his house by daybreak. As I passed that hall, the door was open; I entered to take one last look, and bid it adieu! I had sat in it with Julia the night before; the chairs we had occupied were still in their places; you know not, my friend, what I felt at the sight; there was something in the silent attitude of those very chairs, that wrung my heart beyond the power of language; and, I believe, the servant had told me that my horses waited, five or six times over, before I could listen to what he said.

A gentleman has sent to ask, if my name is Savillon: if it is, he desires his compliments, and will do himself the pleasure of waiting upon me. I started to hear my name thus asked for in Martinique.

This gentleman was a sea-captain, a particular acquaintance of my uncle: he is more, Beauvaris, he is an acquaintance of Roubigné, has been often at Belville, has sometimes seen my Julia.—We are intimate already, and he has offered to conduct me to my uncle's house: his horses, he says, are in waiting.

Adieu, my dearest friend! think of me often; write to me often: though you should seldom have an opportunity of conveying letters, yet write as if you had; make a journal of intelligence, and let it come when it may. Tell me every thing, though I should ask nothing. Your letters must give me back my country, and nothing is a trifle that belongs to her.

LETTER XXVII.

Savillon to Beauvaris.

It is now a week since I reached my uncle's, during all which time I have been so much occupied in answering questions to the curiosity of others, or asking questions for the satisfaction of my own, that I have scarce had a moment left for any other employment.

I have now seized the opportunity of the rest of the family being still a-bed, to write to you an account of this uncle; of him under whose protection I am to rise into life, under whose guidance I am to thrid the mazes of the world. I fear I am unfit for the task: I must unlearn feelings in which I have long been accustomed to delight: I must accommodate sentiments to conveniency, pride to interest, and sometimes even virtue itself to fashion.

But is all this absolutely necessary?—I hate to believe it. I have been frequently told so indeed; but my authorities are drawn either from men who have never entered the scene at all, or entered it, resolved to be overcome, without the trouble of resistance. To think too meanly of mankind, is dangerous to our reverence of virtue.

It is supposed, that, in these wealthy islands, profit is the only medium of opinion, and that morality has nothing to do in the system; but I cannot easily imagine that, in any latitude, the bosom is shut to those pleasures which result from the exercise of goodness, or that honesty should be always so unsuccessful as to have the sneer of the million against it. Men will not be depraved beyond the persuasion of some motive, and self-interest will often be the parent of social obligation.

My uncle is better fitted for judging of this question;

he is cool enough to judge of it from experience, without being misled by feeling.—He believes there are many more honest dealings than honest men, but that there are more honest men than knaves every where; that common sense will keep them so, even exclusive of principle; but that all may be vanquished by adequate temptation.

With a competent share of plain useful parts, and a certain steady application of mind, he entered into commerce at an early period of life. Not apt to be seduced by the glare of great apparent advantage, nor easily intimidated from his purposes by accidental disappointment, he has held on, with some vicissitude of fortune, but with uniform equality of temper, till, in virtue of his abilities, his diligence, and his observation, he has acquired very considerable wealth. He still, however, continues the labour of the race, though he has already reached the goal; not because he is covetous of greater riches, but because the industry, by which greater riches are acquired, is grown necessary to his enjoyment of life. "I have been long (said he yesterday) a very happy man; having had a little less time, and a little more money, than I know what to make of."

The opinion of the world he trusts but little, in his judgement of others; of men's actions he speaks with caution, either in praise or blame, and is commonly most sceptical when those around him are most convinced: for it is a maxim with him, in questions of character, to doubt of strong evidence, from the very circumstance of its strength.

With regard to himself, however, he accepts of the common opinion, as a sort of coin, which passes current, though it is not always real, and often seems to yield up the conviction of his own mind in compliance to the general voice. Ever averse to splendid project in action, or splendid conjecture in argument, he

contents himself with walking in the beaten track of things, and does not even venture to leave it, though he may, now and then, observe it making small deviations from reason and justice. He has sometimes, since our acquaintance began, tapped me on the shoulder, in the midst of some sentiment I was uttering, and told me, with a smile, that these were fine words, and did very well in the mouth of a young man. Yet he seems not displeased with my feeling what himself does not feel; and looks on me with the more favourable eye, that I have something about me for experience and observation to prune.

His plan of domestic œconomy is regular, but nobody is disturbed by its regularity; for he is perfectly free from that rigid attention to method, which one frequently sees in the houses of old bachelors. He has sense, or *sang-froid* enough, not to be troubled with little disarrangements, and bears with wonderful complacency, and consequently with great ease to guests, those accidents which disturb the peace of other entertainments. Since my arrival, we have had every day something like a feast, probably from a sort of compliment which his friends meant to pay to him and to me; but at his table, in its most elevated style, the government is nearly republican; he assumes very little, either of the trouble or the dignity of a landlord, satisfied with giving a general assurance of welcome and good-humour in his aspect.

At one of those dinners was a neighbour and intimate acquaintance of my uncle, a Mr. Dorville, with his wife and daughter. The young lady was seated next me, and my uncle seemed to incline that I should be particularly pleased with her. He addressed such discourse to her as might draw her forth to the greatest advantage: and, as he had heard me profess myself a lover of music, he made her sing, after dinner, till, I believe, some of the company began to be tired of

their entertainment. After they were gone, he asked my opinion of Mademoiselle Dorville, in that particular style by which a man gives you to understand that his own is a very favourable one. To say truth, the lady's appearance is in her favour; but there is a jealous sort of feeling, which arises in my mind, when I hear the praises of any woman but one; and from that cause, perhaps, I answered my uncle rather coldly. I saw he thought so from the reply he made: I offered some awkward apology: he smiled, and said, I was a philosopher. Alas! he knows not how little claim I have to philosophy in that way; if, indeed, we are so often to profane that word by affixing to it the idea of insensibility.

To-day I begin business. My uncle and I are to view his different plantations, and he is to show me, in general, the province he means to allot me. I wish for an opportunity to be assiduous in his service: till I can do something on my part, his favours are debts upon me. It is only to a friend like my Beauvaris that one feels a pleasure in being obliged.

LETTER XXVIII.

Savillon to Beauvaris.

A THOUSAND thanks for your last letter. When you know how much I enjoyed the unwieldy appearance of the packet, with my friend's hand on the back of it, you will not grudge the time it cost you. It is just such as I wished: your scene-painting is delightful. No man is more susceptible of local attachments than I; and, with the Atlantic between, there is not a stone in France which I can remember with indifference.

Yet I am happier here than I could venture to expect. Had I been left to my own choice, I should

probably have sat down in solicitude, to think of the past, and enjoy my reflections; but I have been forced to do better. There is an active duty, which rewards every man in the performance; and my uncle has so contrived matters, that I have had very little time unemployed. He has been liberal of instruction, and, I hope, has found me willing to be instructed. Our business, indeed, is not very intricate; but, in the simplest occupations, there are a thousand little circumstances which experience alone can teach us. In certain departments, however, I have tried projects of my own: some of them have failed in the end, but all gave me pleasure in the pursuit. In one I have been successful beyond expectation; and in that one I was the most deeply interested, because it touched the cause of humanity.

To a man not callous from habit, the treatment of the negroes in the plantations here is shocking. I felt it strongly, and could not forbear expressing my sentiments to my uncle. He allowed them to be natural, but pleaded necessity, in justification of those severities which his overseers sometimes used towards his slaves. I ventured to doubt this proposition, and begged he would suffer me to try a different mode of government in one plantation, the produce of which he had already allotted to my management. He consented, though with the belief that I should succeed very ill in the experiment.

I began by endeavouring to ingratiate myself with such of the slaves as could best speak the language of my country; but I found this was a manner they did not understand, and that, from a white, the appearance of indulgence carried the suspicion of treachery. Most of them, to whom rigour had become habitual, took the advantage of its remitting, to neglect their work altogether; but this only served to convince me, that my plan was a good one, and that I should undoubt-

edly profit, if I could establish some other motive, whose impulse was more steady than those of punishment and terror.

By continuing the mildness of my conduct, I at last obtained a degree of willingness in the service of some; and I was still induced to believe, that the most savage and sullen among them had principles of gratitude, which a good master might improve to his advantage.

One slave, in particular, had for some time attracted my notice, from that gloomy fortitude with which he bore the hardships of his situation. Upon inquiring of the overseer, he told me that this slave, whom he called Yambu, though, from his youth and appearance of strength, he had been accounted valuable, yet, from the untractable stubbornness of his disposition, was worth less money than almost any other in my uncle's possession. This was a language natural to the overseer. I answered him, in his own style, that I hoped to improve his price some hundreds of livres. On being further informed, that several of his fellow-slaves had come from the same part of the Guinea coast with him, I sent for one of them who could speak tolerable French, and questioned him about Yambu. He told me, that, in their own country, Yambu was master of them all; that they had been taken prisoners, when fighting in his cause, by another prince, who, in one battle, was more fortunate than theirs; that he had sold them to some white men, who came, in a great ship, to their coast; that they were afterwards brought hither, where other white men purchased them from the first, and set them to work where I saw them; but that, when they died, and went beyond the Great Mountains, Yambu should be their master again.

I dismissed the negro, and called this Yambu before me.

When he came, he seemed to regard me with an eye of perfect indifference. One who had inquired

no further, would have concluded him possessed of that stupid insensibility which Europeans often mention as an apology for their cruelties. I took his hand; he considered this a prologue to chastisement, and turned his back to receive the lashes he supposed me ready to inflict. I wish to be the friend of Yambu, said I. He made me no answer: I let go his hand, and he suffered it to drop to its former posture. Can this man have been a prince in Africa? said I to myself.—I reflected for a moment.—Yet what should he now do if he has?—Just what I see him do. I have seen a deposed sovereign at Paris; but in Europe, kings are artificial beings, like their subjects.—Silence is the only throne which adversity has left to princes.

I fear, said I to him, you have been sometimes treated harshly by the overseer; but you shall be treated so no more; I wish all my people to be happy. He looked on me now for the first time.—Can you speak my language, or shall I call for some of your friends who can explain what you would say to me?—I speak no say to you, he replied in his broken French.—And you will not be my friend?—No.—Even if I should deserve it?—You a white man.—I felt the rebuke as I ought.—But all white men are not overseers. What shall I do to make you think me a good man?—Use men goodly.—I mean to do so, and you among the first, Yambu.—Be good for Yambu's people; do your please with Yambu.

Just then the bell rang as a summons for the negroes to go to work: he made a few steps towards the door. Would you now go to work, said I, if you were at liberty to avoid it?—You make go for whip, and no man love go.—I will go along with you, though I am not obliged; for I choose to work sometimes, rather than be idle.—Choose work, no work at all, said Yambu.—'Twas the very principle on which my system was founded.

I took him with me into the house when our task was over. I wrought choose-work, said I, Yambu, yet I did less than you.—Yambu do choose-work then too?—You shall do so always, answered I; from this moment you are mine no more!—You sell me other white men then?—No, you are free, and may do whatever you please!—Yambu's please no here, no this country; he replied, waving his hand, and looking wistfully towards the sea.—I cannot give you back your country, Yambu; but I can make this one better for you. You can make it better for me too, and for your people!——Speak Yambu that, said he eagerly, and be good man!—You would not, said I, make your people work by the whip, as you see the overseers do?—Oh! no, no whip!—Yet they must work, else we shall have no sugars to buy them meat and clothing with.—(He put his hand to his brow, as if he had started a difficulty he was unable to overcome.)—Then you shall have the command of them, and they shall work choose-work for Yambu.—He looked askance, as if he doubted the truth of what I said. I called the negro with whom I had the first conversation about him, and, pointing to Yambu, Your master, said I, is now free, and may leave you when he pleases!—Yambu no leave you, said he to the negro warmly.—But he may accompany Yambu if he chooses.——Yambu shook his head.—Master, said his former subject, where we go? leave good white man, and go to bad; for much bad white men in this country.—Then if you think it better, you shall both stay; Yambu shall be my friend, and help me to raise sugars for the good of us all: you shall have no overseer but Yambu, and shall work no more than he bids you. The negro fell at my feet, and kissed them; Yambu stood silent, and I saw a tear on his cheek.—This man has been a prince in Africa! said I to myself.

I did not mean to deceive them. Next morning I

called those negroes who had formerly been in his service together, and told them that, while they continued in the plantation, Yambu was to superintend their work; and if they chose to leave him and me, they were at liberty to go; and that, if found idle or unworthy, they should not be allowed to stay. He has, accordingly, ever since had the command of his former subjects, and superintended their work in a particular quarter of the plantation: and, having been declared free, according to the mode prescribed by the laws of the island, has a certain portion of ground allotted him, the produce of which is his property. I have had the satisfaction of observing those men, under the feeling of good treatment, and the idea of liberty, do more than almost double their number subject to the whip of an overseer. I am under no apprehension of desertion or mutiny; they work with the willingness of freedom, yet are mine with more than the obligation of slavery.

I have been often tempted to doubt whether there is not an error in the whole plan of negro servitude, and whether whites, or creoles born in the West-Indies, or perhaps cattle, after the manner of European husbandry, would not do the business better and cheaper than the slaves do. The money which the latter cost at first, the sickness (often owing to despondency of mind) to which they are liable after their arrival, and the proportion that die in consequence of it, make the machine, if it may be so called, of a plantation extremely expensive in its operations. In the list of slaves belonging to a wealthy planter, it would astonish you to see the number unfit for service, pining under disease, a burden on their master.—I am talking only as a merchant:—but as a man—good Heavens! when I think of the many thousands of my fellow-creatures groaning under servitude and misery!—— Great God! hast thou peopled those regions of thy

world for the purpose of casting out their inhabitants to chains and torture?—No; thou gavest them a land teeming with good things, and lightedst up thy sun to bring forth spontaneous plenty; but the refinements of man, ever at war with thy works, have changed this scene of profusion and luxuriance, into a theatre of rapine, of slavery, and of murder!

Forgive the warmth of this apostrophe! here it would not be understood; even my uncle, whose heart is far from a hard one, would smile at my romance, and tell me that things must be so. Habit, the tyrant of nature and of reason, is deaf to the voice of either; here she stifles humanity, and debases the species—for the master of slaves has seldom the soul of a man.

This is not difficult to be accounted for; from his infancy he is made callous to those feelings which soften at once and ennoble our nature. Children must of necessity first exert those towards domestics, because the society of domestics is the first they enjoy; here they are taught to command for the sake of commanding, to beat and torture for pure amusement;—their reason and good nature improve as may be expected.

Among the legends of an European nursery, are stories of captives delivered, of slaves released, who had pined for years in the durance of unmerciful enemies. Could we suppose its infant audience transported to the sea-shore, where a ship laden with slaves is just landing; the question would be universal, Who shall set these poor people free?—The young West-Indian asks his father to buy a boy for him, that he may have something to vent his spite on when he is peevish.

Methinks too, these people lose a sort of connexion which is of more importance in life than most of the relationships we enjoy. The ancient, the tried domestic of a family, is one of its most useful members, one of its most assured supports. My friend, the ill-

fated Roubigné, has not one relation who has stood by him in the shipwreck of his fortunes; but the storm could not sever from their master his faithful Le Blanc, or the venerable Lasune.

Oh Beauvaris! I sometimes sit down alone, and, transporting myself into the little circle at Roubigné's, grow sick of the world, and hate the part which I am obliged to perform in it.

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LETTER XXIX*.

Savillon to Beauvaris.

SINCE the date of my last, is a longer period than you allow between my letters; but my time has been more than commonly occupied of late. Among other employments was that of acquiring a friend. Be not, however, jealous; my heart cannot own a second in the same degree with Beauvaris; yet is this one above the level of ordinary men. He enjoys also that privilege which misfortune bestows on the virtuous.

Among those with whom my uncle's extensive dealings have connected him, he had mentioned, with particular commendation, one Herbert, an Englishman, a merchant in one of the British West-India islands. Chance brought him lately to Martinique, and I was solicitous to show every possible civility to one, who to the claim of a stranger added the character of a worthy

* It is proper to apologize to the reader for introducing a letter so purely episodical. I might tell him, that it is not altogether unnecessary, as it introduces to his acquaintance a person, whose correspondent Savillon becomes at a future period; but I must once more resort to an egotism for the true reason: the picture it exhibited pleased myself, and I could not resist the desire of communicating it.

and amiable man. Prepossessed as I was in his favour, my expectations fell short of the reality. I discovered in him a delicacy and fineness of sentiment, which something beyond the education of a trader must have inspired; and I looked on him perhaps with the greater reverence, from the circumstance of having found him in a station where I did not expect he would be found. On a closer investigation, I perceived a tincture of melancholy enthusiasm in his mind, which, I was persuaded, was not altogether owing to the national character, but must have arisen from some particular cause. This increased my regard for him; and I could not help expressing it in the very style which was suited to its object, a quiet and still attention, sympathetic but not intrusive. He seemed to take notice of my behaviour, and looked as if he had found a person who guessed him to be unhappy, and to whom he could talk of his unhappiness. I encouraged the idea with that diffidence, which, I believe, is of all manners the most intimate with a mind of the sort I have described; and, soon after, he took an opportunity of telling me the story of his misfortunes.

It was simple, but not the less pathetic. Inheriting a considerable fortune from his father, he set out in trade with every advantage. Soon after he was settled in business, he married a beautiful and excellent woman, for whom, from his infancy, he had conceived the tenderest attachment; and, about a year after their marriage, she blessed him with a son. But love and fortune did not long continue to smile upon him. Losses in trade, to which, though benevolence like his be more exposed, the most prudent and unfeeling are liable, reduced him, from his former affluence, to very embarrassed circumstances; and his distress was aggravated from the consideration, that he did not suffer alone, but communicated misfortune to a woman he passionately loved. Some very considerable debts

remained due to him in the West-Indies, and he found it absolutely necessary, for their recovery, to repair thither himself, however terrible might be a separation from his wife, now in a situation of all others the most susceptible. They parted, and she was, soon after, delivered of a girl, whose promising appearance, as well as that of her brother, was some consolation for the absence of their father.

His absence, though cruel, was necessary, and he found his affairs in such a situation that it promised not to be long. Day after day, however, elapsed, without their final settlement. The impatience both of his wife and him was increased, by the appearance of a conclusion, which so repeatedly disappointed them; till, at last, he ventured to suggest, and she warmly approved, the expedient of coming out to a husband whose circumstances prevented him from meeting her at home. She set sail with her children; but wife nor children ever reached the unfortunate Herbert! they perished in a storm soon after their departure from England.

You can judge of the feelings of a man who upbraided himself as their murderer. An interval of madness, he informed me, succeeded the account he received of their death. When his reason returned, it settled into a melancholy, which time has soothed, not extinguished; which indeed seems to have become the habitual tone of his mind. Yet is it gentle, though deep, in its effects; it disturbs not the circle of society around him, and few, except such as are formed to discover and to pity it, observe any thing peculiar in his behaviour. But he holds it not the less sacred to himself; and often retires from the company of those whom he has entertained with the good-humour of a well-bred man, to arrange the memorials of his much-loved Emily, and call up the sad remembrance of his former joys.

Having acquired a sort of privilege with his distress, from my acquaintance with its cause, I entered his room yesterday, when he had thus shut out the world, and found him with some letters on the table before him, on which he looked, with a tear not of anguish, but of tenderness. I stopped short on perceiving him thus employed; he seemed unable to speak; but making a movement, as if he desired that I should come forward, put two of those letters successively into my hand. They were written by his wife: the first, soon after their marriage, when some business had called him away from her into the country; and the second, addressed to him in the West-Indies, where, by that time, their ill-fortune had driven him. They pleased me so much, that I asked his leave to keep them for a day or two. He would not absolutely refuse me; but said, They had never been out of his possession. I pressed him no further; I could only read them over repeatedly, and some parts, that struck most forcibly on my memory, which you know is pretty tenacious, I can recollect almost *verbatim.* To another, it might seem odd to write such things as these; but my Beauvaris is never inattentive to the language of nature, or the voice of misfortune.

In the first letter were the following expressions:

"You know not what feelings are here, at thus, for the first time, writing to my Henry under the name of Husband.—A mixture of tenderness, of love, of esteem, and confidence; a something never experienced before, is so warm in my heart, that sure it is, at this moment, more worthy of his love than ever.—Shall not this last, my Harry, notwithstanding what I have heard from the scoffers among you men? I think it will. It is not a tumultuous transport, that must suddenly disappear; but the soft, still pleasure of a happy

mind, that can feel its happiness, and delight in its cause.

"I have had little company since you left me, and I wish not for much. The idea of my Henry is my best companion. I have figured out your journey, your company, and your business, and filled up my hours with the picture of what they are to you."

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"John has just taken away my chicken: you know he takes liberties—'Dear heart, a leg and wing only! —Betty says, Madam, the cheesecakes are excellent.' —I smiled at John's manner of pressing, and helped myself to a cheesecake. The poor fellow looked so happy—'My master will soon return,' said he, by way of accounting for my puny dinner. He set the wine upon the table: I filled out half a glass, and began to think of you; but, in carrying it to my lips, I reproached myself that it was not a bumper: that was remedied as it should be. John, I believe, guessed at the correction—'God bless him!' I heard him say, muttering as he put up the things in his basket.—I sent him down with the rest of the bottle, and they are now drinking your health in the kitchen."

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"My cousin Harriet has come in to see me, and is going on with the cap I was making up, while I write this by her. She is a better milliner than I, and would have altered it somewhat; but I stuck to my own way, for I heard you say you liked it in that shape.—'It is not half so fashionable, indeed, my dear,' said Harriet; but she does not know the luxury of making up a cap to please the husband one loves.—This is all very foolish: is it not? but I love to tell you those trifles: it

is like having you here. If you can, write to me just such a letter about you."

Of the other letter, I recollect some passages, such as these:

"Captain Lewson has just now been with me, but has brought no letter; and gives for reason, your having written by a ship that left the island but a few days before him, meaning the Triton, by which I got your last; but I beg to hear from you by every opportunity, especially by so friendly a hand as Lewson; it would endear a man, to whom I have reason to be grateful, much more to me, that he brought a few lines from you. Think, my dearest Harry, that hearing from you is all that your Emily has now to expect, at least for a long, long time.

"Perhaps (as you sometimes told me, in former days, when, alas! we only talked of misfortunes) we always think our present calamity the bitterest; yet methinks our separation is the only evil for which I could not have found a comfort. In truth, we were not unhappy: health and strength were left us: we could have done much for one another, and for our dear little ones. I fear, my love, you thought of me less nobly, than I hope I deserved: I was not to be shocked by any retrenchment from our former way of living: I could have borne even the hardships of poverty, had it left me my Henry."

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"Your sweetmeats arrived very safe under the care of Captain Lewson: the children have profited by them, particularly Billy, who has still some remains of the hooping-cough. He asked me, If they did not come from papa? 'And when,' said he, 'will papa come himself?' 'Papa,' cried my little Emmy, who has just

learned to lisp the word. 'She never saw papa,' replied her brother, 'did she, mamma?'—I could not stand this prattle; my boy wept with me for company's sake!

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"Emmy, they tell me, will be a beauty. She has, to say truth, lovely dark-blue eyes, and a charming complexion. I think there is something of melancholy in her look: but this may be only my fancy. Billy is quite different, a bold-spirited child; yet he is remarkably attentive to every thing I endeavour to teach him, and can read a little already, with no other tutor than myself. I chose this task, to amuse my lonely hours; for I make it a point of duty, to keep up my spirits as well as I can. Sometimes, indeed, I droop in spite of me, especially when you seem to waver about the time of your return. Think, my love, what risks your health runs for the sake of those riches, which are of no use without it; and, after all, it is chiefly in opinion, that their power of bestowing happiness consists. I am sure, the little parlour, in which I now write, is more snug and comfortable, than the large room we used to receive company in formerly; and the plain meal, to which I sit down with my children, has more relish than the formal dinners we were obliged to invite them to. Return then, my dearest Harry, from those fatigues and dangers, to which, by your own account, you are obliged to be exposed. Return to your Emily's love, and the smiles of those little cherubs that wait your arrival."

Such was the wife whom Herbert lost; you will not wonder at his grief! yet, sometimes, when the whole scene is before me, I know not how, I almost envy him his tears.

It is something to endeavour to comfort him. 'Tis

perhaps a selfish movement in our nature, to conceive an attachment to such a character; one that throws itself on our pity by feeling its distresses, is ever more beloved than that which rises above them.—I know, however, without further inquiry, that I feel myself pleased with being the friend of Herbert; would we were in France, that I might make him the friend of Beauvaris!

Your last mentions nothing of Roubigné, or his family. I know he dislikes writing, and therefore am not surprised at his silence to myself. You say, in a former letter, you find it difficult to hear of them; there is a young lady in Paris, for whom the lovely Julia has long entertained a very uncommon friendship; her name is Roncilles, daughter of the president Roncilles.—Yet, on second thoughts, I would not have you visit her on purpose to make inquiry as from me; but you may fall on some method of getting intelligence of them in this line.

Do not let slip the opportunity of this ship's return to write to me fully; she is consigned to a correspondent of ours, and particular care will be taken of my letters. I think, if that had been the case with the last that arrived here, I should have found one from you on board of her. Think of me frequently, and write to me as often as our situation will allow.

LETTER XXX.

Savillon to Beauvaris.

I BEGIN to suspect that the sensibility, of which young minds are proud, from which they look down with contempt on the unfeeling multitude of ordinary men, is less a blessing than an inconvenience.—Why cannot I be as happy as my uncle, as Dorville, as all

the other good people around me?—I eat, and drink, and sing, nay I can be merry, like them; but they close the account, and set down this mirth for happiness; I retire to the family of my own thoughts, and find them in weeds of sorrow.

Herbert left this place yesterday! the only man, besides thee, whom my soul can acknowledge as a friend. And him, perhaps, I shall see no more: And thee! my heart droops at this moment, and I could weep without knowing why.—Tell me, as soon as possible, that you are well and happy; there is, methinks, a languor in your last letter—or is it but the livery of my own imagination, which the objects around me are constrained to wear?

Herbert was a sort of proxy for my Beauvaris; he spoke from the feelings of a heart like his. To him I could unbosom mine, and be understood; for the speaking of a common language is but one requisite towards the dearest intercourse of society. His sorrows gave him a sacredness in my regard, that made every endeavour to serve or oblige him, like the performance of a religious duty; there was a quiet satisfaction in it, which calmed the rufflings of a sometimes troubled spirit, and restored me to peace with myself.

He has sailed for England, whither some business, material to a friend of his much-loved Emily, obliges him to return. He yields to this, I perceive, as a duty he thinks himself bound to discharge, though the sight of his native country, spoiled as it is of those blessings which it once possessed for him, must be no easy trial of his fortitude. He talks of leaving it as soon as this affair will allow him, not to return to the West-Indies (for of his business there he is now independent), but to travel through some parts of Europe, which the employments of his younger years prevented him from visiting at an early period of life. If he

goes to Paris, he has promised me to call on you.—Could I be with you!—What a thought is there!—but I shall not be forgotten at the interview.

I have just received yours of the third of last month. I must still complain of its shortness, though I dare not quarrel with it, as it assures me of your welfare. But get rid, I pray you, of that very bad practice, of supposing things unimportant at Martinique, because you think them so at Paris. Give me your intelligence, and allow me to be the judge of its consequence.

You are partial to your friend, when you write in such high terms, of his treatment of Yambu. We think but seldom of those things which habit has made common, otherwise we should correct many of them: there needed only to give one's feelings room on this theme, and they could prompt no other conduct than mine. Your approbation, however, is not lost upon me; the best of our resolutions are bettered, by a consciousness of the suffrage of good men in their favour; and the reward is still higher, when that suffrage is from those we love.

My uncle has sent to me, to help him to entertain some company who are just arrived here. He knows not what a train of thinking he calls me from—I have a little remembrancer, Beauvaris, a picture, which has hung at my bosom for some years past, that speaks such things!—

The servant again!——Mademoiselle Dorville is below, and I must come immediately.—Well then—it will be difficult for me to be civil to her—yet the girl deserves politeness.—But that picture!—

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LETTER XXXI.

Savillon to Beauvaris.

You say the letter to which your last was an answer was written in low spirits: I confess I am not always in high ones; not even now, though I am just returned from a little feast, where there was much mirth, and excellent wine. It was a dinner given by Dorville, on occasion of his daughter's birth-day, to which my uncle and I, among other of his friends, had been long invited. The old gentleman displayed all his wealth, and all his wit, in entertaining us: some of us thanked him for neither, though every one's complaisance obliged them to eat of his dainties, and laugh at his jests.

It is after such a scene, that one is often in a state the most stupid of any. The assumption of a character, in itself humiliating, distresses and wastes us, while the loss of so much time, like the bad fortune of a gamester, is doubly felt, when we reflect that fools have won from us. Yet it must be so in life, and I wish to overcome the spleen of repining at it.

I was again set next Mademoiselle Dorville, and had the honour of accompanying some of the songs she sung to us. A vain fellow, in my circumstances, might imagine that girl liked him. I believe there is nothing so serious in her mind, and I should be sorry there were The theft of a woman's affections is not so atrocious, as that of her honour; but I have often seen it more terrible than that of her life; at least, if living wretchedness be worse than death: yet is it reckoned a very venial breach of confidence, to endeavour to become more than agreeable, where a man feels it impossible to repay what he may receive. Her father, I am apt to believe, has something of what is

commonly called a plot upon me; but as to him my conscience is easy, because, the coffers of my uncle being his quarry, it matters not much if he is disappointed.

Were it not from a point of delicacy, not to run the smallest risk of being thought particular, I could, sometimes, be very well entertained with the society of Mademoiselle Dorville. There is a sprightliness about her, which amuses, though it is not winning, and I never found it so easy to talk nonsense to any other woman. I fancy this is always the case, where there is no chance of the heart being interested: it is perfectly so in the present instance with me. Oh! Beauvaris! I have laid out more soul in sitting five minutes with Julia de Roubigné in silence, than I should in a year's conversation with this little Dorville.

The conversation of women has perhaps a charm from its weakness; but this must be, like all their other weaknesses that please us, what claims an interest in our affections, without offending our reason. I know not if there is really a sex in the soul: custom and education have established one, in our idea; but we wish to feel the inferiority of the other sex, as one that does not debase, but endear it.

To their knowledge, in many things, we have set limits, because it seems to encroach on the softness of their feelings, which we suppose of that retiring kind, that shuns the keenness of argument or inquiry. Knowledge or learning has often this effect among men: it is even sometimes fatal to taste, if by taste is meant the effect which beauties have on ourselves, rather than the power of criticizing on that which they ought to have on others.

There is a little world of sentiment made for women to move in, where they certainly excel our sex, and where our sex, perhaps, ought to be excelled by them. This is irresistibly engaging, where it is natu-

ral; but, of all affectations, that of sentiment is the most disgusting. It is, I believe, more common in France than any where else; and I am not sure, if it does not proceed from our women possessing the reality less. The daughter of Mons. Dorville, when she would be great, is always sentimental. I was forced to tell her to-day, that I hated sentiments, and that they spoiled the complexion. She looked in the glass, and began to ask some questions about the Italian comedy.

My uncle, who had staid some time behind me with Dorville, came in. He was very copious on the subject of Mademoiselle. I was perfectly of his opinion in every thing, and praised her in echo to what he said; but he had discernment enough to see an indifference in this, which I was sorry to find he did not like. I know not how far he meant to go, if we had been long together; but he found himself somewhat indisposed, and was obliged to go to bed.

I sat down alone, and thought of Julia de Roubigné.

My uncle is, this morning, really ill. I owe him too much, not to be distressed at this. He is uneasy about his own situation, though, I believe, without reason; but men, who, like him, have enjoyed uninterrupted health, are apt to be apprehensive. I have sent for a physician without letting him know; for it was another effect of his good constitution, to hold the faculty in contempt. At present, I am sure, he will thank me, in his heart, for my precaution.

The doctor has been with him, and talks doubtfully; that, perhaps, is unavoidable in a science, from its nature, so uncertain; for this man has really too much knowledge to wish to seem wiser.

I find I must conclude this letter, as the ship, by which I am to send it, is within a quarter of an hour of sailing. Would it had been a few days later! a few days might do much in a fate like mine.——I cannot express that sort of doubt and fear, which the look of futurity, at this moment, gives me.

Do not, for Heaven's sake, do not fail to write to me about the situation of Roubigné and his family. I know his unwillingness to write, and decorum prevents (is it vanity to think so?) his daughter; therefore I addressed my last letter to Madame de Roubigné; but even when I shall receive her answer, it will not say enough. You know what my heart requires; do not disappoint it *.

LETTER XXXII.

Julia de Roubigné to Maria de Roncilles.

You must not expect to hear from me as often as formerly: we have, here, an even tenor of days, that admits not of much description. Comedies and romances, you know, always end with a marriage, because, after that, there is nothing to be said.

But I have reason to be angry with you for finding so little to say at Paris; though, I believe, the fault is in myself, or rather in your idea of me. You think I am not formed to relish those articles of intelligence, which are called news in your great town; the truth is, I have often heard them with very little relish; but

* There are no letters, in this collection, of a later date, from Savillon to Beauvaris. The person who at first arranged them, seems to intend to account for this, by the following note on the outside of the preceding one, written in a hand of which I see little jottings on several of the letters, "Beauvaris died 5th April, a few days after the receipt of this."

I know you have wit enough to make them pleasant if you would; and even if you had not, do but write any thing, and I shall read it with an interest.

You flatter me by your praises of the *naïveté*, in the picture I drew of our party of pleasure. God knows, I have no talent that way; yet the group was fantastic enough, and, though I felt quite otherwise than merry next morning, when I wrote to you, yet I found a sort of pleasure in describing it. There is a certain kind of trifling, in which a mind not much at ease can sometimes indulge itself. One feels an escape, as it were, from the heart, and is fain to take up with lighter company. It is like the theft of a truant-boy, who goes to play for a few minutes while his master is asleep, and throws the chiding for his task upon futurity.

We have very different company at present. Madame de Sancerre has been here these three days. Her husband was an acquaintance of Mons. de Montauban in Spain, and, you will remember, we used to be of her parties in town; so she is a guest of both sides of the house, though, I believe, no great favourite of either. She is a wit, you know, and says abundance of good things: and will say any thing, provided it be witty. Here, indeed, we give her so little opportunity, that her genius is almost famished for want of subject. At Paris, I remember her surrounded with men of letters; they praised her learning, and to us she seemed wonderful both as a scholar and a critic; but here, when I turn the discourse on books, she chooses to talk of nothing but the *beau monde*. Her descriptions, however, are diverting enough, and I believe she is not the worse pleased with me, that I can only hear them without being able to answer; for I think, if there is a member of our society she dislikes, it is that relation of the count, whom I mentioned to you in my last, Mons. de Rouillé, who is come to

spend some weeks here. From the account of his vivacity, which I received from his kinsman, I thought Madame de Sancerre would have thought it a piece of high good fortune to have met him here; but, I see, I mistook the thing; and that she would relish his company better, if he were as stupid as the rest of us. I am of a different opinion, and begin to like him much; the better that I was prepared to be somewhat afraid of him; but I find in him nothing to be feared; on the contrary, he is my very safest barrier against the sometimes too powerful brilliancy of the lady.

Rouillé is constitutionally happy; but his vivacity, though it seems to be constant, does not appear to be unfeeling. It is not the cheerfulness of an unthinking man, who is ready to laugh, on all occasions, without leave of his reason; or, what is worse, of his humanity: some such people I have seen, whose mirth was like the pranks of a madman, and, if not of consequence enough to excite anger or fear, was entitled to our compassion. Rouillé has the happy talent of hitting that point where sentiment mingles with good-humour. His wit, except when forced into opposition by the petulance of others, is ever of that gentle kind from which we have nothing to dread; that sports itself in the level of ordinary understandings, and pleases, because it makes no one displeased with himself. Even the natural gravity of Montauban yields to the winning liveliness of Rouillé; and though the first seems to feel a little awkwardness in the attempt, yet he often comes down from the loftiness of his own character, to meet the pleasantry of the other's.

Do not rally me on the savour of matrimony in the observation, if I venture to say that Montauban seems to have resumed somewhat of his former dignity. Think not that I suspect the smallest diminution of his affection; but now when the ease of the husband has restored him to his native character—I know not what

I would say—Believe me, I mean nothing at all—I have the greatest reason to be satisfied and happy.

At present, I believe, he is now and then out of humour with this visitant of ours, Madame de Sancerre; and, it may be, thrown into somewhat of a severity in his manner, from the observation of an opposite one in her. When she utters, as she does pretty often, any joke at which she laughs heartily herself, I laugh, sometimes with good-will, but oftener (out of complacence) without; Rouillé laughs, and is ready with his jest in return; but Montauban looks graver than ever. Indeed, there is no resource for one who cannot laugh at a jest, but to look grave at it.

I wish my Maria could have accepted of the invitation he communicated by me some time ago. I think I should have shown him, in my friend, a liveliness that would not have displeased him. Could you still contrive to come, while Rouillé is here, you must be charmed with one another. It would give me an opportunity of making up to you, for the many dull letters I have obliged you to read; but you taxed yourself early with my correspondence; it was then, perhaps, tolerable; it has, of late, been a mere collection of egotisms, the egotisms too of a mind ill at ease—but I have given up making apologies or acknowledgements to you; they are only for common obligations: mine is a debt beyond their quittance.

LETTER XXXIII.

Montauban to Segarva.

I am now three letters in your debt; yet the account of correspondence used formerly to be in my favour. The truth is, that of facts I have nothing to write, and of sentiments almost as little. Of the first, my situ-

ation here in the country deprives me; and of the last, that quiet sort of state I have got into is little productive. When I was unhappy as the lover of Julia, or first happy as her husband, I had theme enough, and to spare. I can tell you, that I am happy still; but it is a sort of happiness that would not figure in narration. I believe my Julia is every thing that a good wife should be: I hope I am a good husband. I am neither young nor old enough for a doting one.

You will smile and look back to certain letters and notes of mine, written some four or five months ago. I do not know why I should be ashamed of them. Were Segarva to marry, he would write such letters for a while, and there never was a man who could write such letters long. If there were, I am not sure if I should wish to be that man. When we cannot be quite so happy as others, our pride naturally balances the account: it shows us that we are wiser.

Rouillé, who has been here for a week or two, is of a different opinion: he holds the happiest man to be ever the wisest. You know Rouillé's disposition, which was always too much in the sun for us; but the goodness of his heart, and the purity of his honour, are above the rest of his character. With this prepossession in his favour, I hear him laugh at me, without resentment; and by and by he steals upon me, till I forget myself, and laugh with him. I am sometimes gay; but I feel a sort of trouble in gaiety. It is exactly the reverse with Rouillé: he can be serious, when he means to be so; but, if we mean nothing, he is gay, and I am serious.

My wife is neither one nor t'other: there is something about her too gentle for either; but, I think, her pensive softness deserts more readily to Rouillé's side than to mine, though one should imagine his manner the more distant from hers of the two. Rouillé jokes me on this: he calls her the middle stage be-

tween us; but says, it is up-hill towards my side. A solitary castle, and a still evening, said he, would make a Julia of me; but to be Montauban, I must have a fog and a prison.

Perhaps, if we consider matters impartially, these men have the advantage of us: the little cordialities of life are more frequently in use than its greater and more important duties. Somebody, I think, has compared them to small pieces of coin, which, though of less value than the large, are more current amongst them; but the parallel fails in one respect; a thousand of those *livres* do not constitute a *louis;* and I have known many characters possessed of all that the first could give, whose minds were incapable of the last. In this number, however, I mean not to include Rouillé.

We have another guest, who illustrates my meaning better, the widow of Sancerre, whom you introduced to my acquaintance, a long time ago, in Spain. She was then nothing; for Sancerre considered all women nothing, and took care, that during his life she should be no exception to the rule. He died; she regained her freedom; and she uses it as one to whom it had been long denied. She is just fool enough to be a wit, and carries on a perpetual crusade against sense and seriousness. I bear with her very impatiently: she plagues me, I believe, the more. My wife smiles, Rouillé laughs at me; I am unable to laugh, and ashamed to be angry; so I remain silent and stupid.

Sometimes I cease to think of her, and blame myself. Why should I allow this spleen of sense to disqualify me for society?—Once or twice I almost uttered things against my present situation. Julia loves me; I know she does: she has that tenderness and gratitude, which will secure her affection to a husband who loves her as I do; but she must often feel the difference of disposition between us. Had such a man

as Rouillé been her husband—not Rouillé neither, though she seems often delighted with his good-humour, when I cannot be pleased with it.—We are neither of us such a man as the writer of a romance would have made a husband for Julia.—There is, indeed, a pliability in the minds of women in this article, which frequently gains over opinion to the side of duty.—Duty is a cold word.—No matter, we will canvass it no further. I know the purity of her bosom, and I think I am not unworthy of its affection.

Her father I see much seldomer than I could wish; but he is greatly altered of late. Since the time of his wife's death, I have observed him droop apace; but Julia says, that the distress of their circumstances kept up in him a sort of false spirit, which, when they were disembarrassed, left him to sink under reflection. His faculties, I can easily perceive, are not in that vigour they were wont to be; yet his bodily strength does not much decline, and he seems more contented with himself, than he was when in full possession of his abilities. We wish him to live with us; but he has constantly refused our request, and it is a matter of delicacy to press him on that point. We go to see him sometimes: he receives us with satisfaction, not ardour: violent emotions of every kind appear to be quenched in him. It creates, methinks, a feeling of mingled complacency and sadness, to look on the evening of a life and of a character like Roubigné's.

Shall I not see you here some time this autumn? You gave me a sort of promise, and I need you more than ever. I want the society of some one, in whose company I can be pleased, without the tax of thinking that I am silly for being so.

LETTER XXXIV.

Julia to Maria.

I HAVE just now received a piece of intelligence, which I must beg my Maria instantly to satisfy me about. Le Blanc, my father's servant, was here a few hours ago, and, among other news, informed Lisette, that a nephew of his, who is just come with his master from Paris, met Savillon there, whom he perfectly remembered, from having seen him in his visits to his uncle at Belville. The lad had no time for inquiry, as his master's carriage was just setting off, when he observed a chaise drive up to the door of the hotel, with a gentleman in it, whom he knew to be Savillon, accompanied by a valet de chambre, and two black servants on horseback.

Think, Maria, what I feel at this intelligence!—— Yet why should it alarm me?—Alas! you know this poor, weak, throbbing heart of mine! I cannot, if I would, hide it from you.—Find him out, for Heaven's sake, Maria! tell me—yet what now is Savillon to your Julia?—No matter—do any thing your prudence may suggest; only satisfy me about the fate of this once dear—Again! I dare not trust myself on the subject—Mons. de Montauban!—Farewell!

Delay not a moment to answer this.—

Yet do not write, till you have learned something satisfactory.

At any rate, write me speedily.—

I have forgotten the name of the hotel where the lad met him: it was situated in the Rue St. Anne.

LETTER XXXV.

Montauban to Segarva.

MY wife (that word must often come across the narration of a married man) has been a good deal indisposed of late. You will not joke me on this intelligence, as such of my neighbours whom I have seen have done; it is not however what they say, or you may think; her spirits droop more than her body; she is thoughtful and melancholy when she thinks she is not observed, and, what pleases me worse, affects to appear otherwise when she is. I like not this sadness which is conscious of itself. Yet, perhaps, I have seen her thus before our marriage, and have rather admired this turn of mind than disapproved of it; but now I would not have her pensive—nor very gay neither—I would have nothing about her, methinks, to stir a question in me whence it arose. She should be contented with the affection she knows I bear for her. I do not expect her to be romantically happy, and she has no cause for uneasiness—I am not uneasy neither—yet I wish her to conquer this melancholy.

I was last night abroad at supper: Julia was a-bed before my return. I found her lute lying on the table, and a music-book open by it. I could perceive the marks of tears shed on the paper, and the air was such as might encourage their falling: sleep, however, had overcome her sadness, and she did not awake when I opened the curtains to look on her. When I had stood some moments, I heard her sigh strongly through her sleep, and presently she muttered some words, I know not of what import. I had sometimes heard her do so before, without regarding it much; but there was something that roused my attention now. I listened; she sighed again, and again spoke a few

broken words; at last, I heard her plainly pronounce the name *Savillon*, two or three times over, and each time it was accompanied with sighs so deep, that her heart seemed bursting as it heaved them. I confess the thing struck me; and, after musing on it some time, I resolved to try a little experiment this day at dinner, to discover whether chance had made her pronounce this name, or if some previous cause had impressed it on her imagination. I knew a man of that name at Paris, when I first went thither, who had an office under the intendant of the marine. I introduced some conversation on the subject of the fleet, and said, in an indifferent manner, That I had heard so and so from my old acquaintance Savillon. She spilt some soup she was helping me to at the instant; and stealing a glance at her, I saw her cheeks flushed into crimson.

I have been ever since going the round of conjecture on this incident. I think I can recollect once, and but once, her father speak of a person called Savillon residing abroad, from whom he had received a letter; but I never heard Julia mention him at all. I know not why I should have forborne asking her the reason of her being so affected at the sound; yet, at the moment I perceived it, the question stuck in my throat. I felt something like guilt hang over this incident altogether—it is none of mine then—nor of Julia's neither, I trust—and yet, Segarva, it has touched me nearer—much nearer than I should own to any one but you.

Nine at night.

Upon looking over what I had written in the afternoon, I had almost resolved to burn this letter, and write another; but it strikes me as insincerity to a friend like Segarva, not to trust him with the very thought of the moment, weak as it may be.

I begin now to be ashamed of the effect that trifle, I mentioned above, had upon me. Julia is better, and

has been singing to me the old Spanish ballad which you sent us lately. I am delighted with those ancient national songs, because there is a simplicity and an expression in them which I can understand. Adepts in music are pleased with more intricate compositions; and they talk more of the pleasure than they feel; and others talk after them without feeling at all.

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LETTER XXXVI.

Savillon to Herbert.

I AM here in Paris, and fulfil the promise, which your friendship required of me, to write to you immediately on my arrival.

Alas! my reception is not such as I looked for. He, whom alone my arrival should have interested, my ever faithful Beauvaris!—he meets me not—we shall never meet—he died, while I was imagining fond things of our meeting!

Gracious God! what have I done, that I should be always thus an outcast from society? When France was dear to me as life itself, my destiny tore me from her coast; now, when I anticipated the pleasures of my return, is this the welcome she affords me?

Forlorn and friendless as my early days were, I complained not while Beauvaris was mine: he was wholly mine, for his heart was not made for the world. Naturally reserved, he shrunk early from its notice; and, when he had lived to judge of its sentiments, he wished not to be in the list of its friends.

His extreme modesty, indeed, was an evil in his fate; because it deprived him of that protection and assistance which his situation required. Those who

might have been patrons of his merit, had not time to search for talents his bashfulness obscured. His virtues even suffered imputations from it: shy, not only of intimacy, but even of opinion and sentiment, persons, whose situation seemed to entitle them to his confidence, complained of his coldness and indifference; and he was accused of want of feeling from what, in truth, was an excess of sensibility. This jewel, undiscovered by others, was mine. From infancy, each had accustomed himself to consider his friend but a better part of himself; and, when the heart of either was full, talking to the other was but unloading it in soliloquy.

Forgive me, my dear Herbert, for thus dwelling on the subject. The only sad comfort I have now left me, is to think of his worth: it is a privilege I would not waste on common minds, to hear me on this theme; yours can understand it.

Why was I absent from Paris? Too much did the latter days of Beauvaris require me! They saw him struggling with poverty as well as sickness; yet the last letter he wrote me confessed neither; and some little presents, the produce of Martinique, which I sent him, he would not convert into money, because they came from me.

I am now sitting in the room in which he died!—On that paltry bed lay the head of Beauvaris. On this desk, whereon I write, he wrote—Pardon me a while—I am unable to go on.

It is from the indulgence of sorrow that we first know a respite from affliction. I have given a loose to my grief, and I feel the relief which my tears have afforded me. I am now returned to my hotel, and am able to recollect myself.

I have not yet seen any acquaintance of Mons. de Roubigné; this blow, indeed, did not allow me leisure:

or spirits for inquiry; I feel as if I were in a foreign land, and am almost afraid of the noise and bustle I hear in the streets. I have sent, however, offering a visit to a particular young lady, of whom I shall be able to get intelligence of Roubigné's family; but my messenger is not yet returned.

He has found her, and she has appointed me to come to her tomorrow morning. You cannot imagine what a flutter the expectation of this visit has thrown me into; I am not apt to stand in awe of presages, but I could be very weak that way at this moment. My man, who possesses a happy vivacity, brought me in, after dinner, a bottle of Burgundy, which, he said, the landlord assured him was excellent. I have drunk three-fourths of it, by way of medicine; it has made my head somewhat dizzy, but my heart is as heavy as before.

What a letter of egotism have I written! but you have taught me to give vent to my feelings, by the acquaintance you have allowed me with yours. To speak one's distresses to the unfeeling is terrible; even to ask the alms of pity is humiliating; but to pour our griefs into the bosom of a friend, is but committing to him a pledge above the trust of ordinary men.

Do not, I beseech you, forget your design of travelling into France this season!—yet why should I ask this? I know not where fortune may lead me! it cannot, however, place me in a situation where the friendship of Herbert shall be forgotten.

P. S. I direct this for you at London, as, I think, you must be there by this time. Your answer will find me here; let it be speedy.

LETTER XXXVII.

Savillon to Herbert.

BEAR with me, Herbert, bear with me. The first use I make of that correspondence which you desired, is to pour out my miseries before you! but you can hear them.—You have known what it is to love, and to despair as I do.

When I told you my Beauvaris was no more, I thought I had exhausted the sum of distress which this visit to Paris was to give me. I knew not then what fate had prepared for me——that Julia, on whom my doting heart had rested all its hopes of happiness, —that Julia is the wife of another!

All but this I could have borne; the loss of fortune, the decay of health, the coldness of friends, might have admitted of hope; here only was despair to be found, and here I have found it!

Oh! Herbert! she was so interwoven with my thoughts of futurity, that life now fades into a blank, and is not worth the keeping;—but I have a use for it; I will see her yet at least——Wherefore should I wish to see her?—Yet, methinks, it is now the only object that can prompt a wish in me.

When I visited that lady, that Maria de Roncilles, whom I knew to be the dearest of her friends, she seemed to receive me with confusion; her tongue could scarce articulate the words that told me of Julia's marriage! She mentioned something too of having heard of mine.—I am tortured every way with conjecture—my brain scarce holds its recollection—Julia de Roubigné is married to another!

I know not what I said to this friend of hers at first; I remember only that, when I had recovered a little, I begged her to convey a letter from me to Julia: she

seemed to hesitate in her consent; but she did at last consent. Twice have I written, and twice have I burnt what I had written—I have no friend to guide, to direct—not even to weep to!

At last I have finished that letter; it contains the last request which the miserable Savillon has to make. This one interview past, and my days have nothing to mark them with anxiety or hope.

I am now more calmly wretched; the writing of that letter has relieved, for a while, my swelling heart. I went with it myself to Mademoiselle de Roncilles's; she was abroad, so I left it without seeing her. You can judge of my feelings; I wondered at the indifference of the faces I met with in my way; they had no cares to cloud them, none at least like Savillon's—Why of all those thousands am I the most wretched?

I am returned to my hotel. I hear the voices of my servants below: they are telling, I suppose, the adventures of their voyage. I can distinguish the voice of my man, and his audience are merry around him.—Why should he not jest? he knows not what his master suffers.

Something like a stupid sleepiness oppresses me: last night, I could not sleep. Where are now those luxurious slumbers, those wandering dreams of future happiness?—Never shall I know them again! Good night, my Herbert!—It is something still to sleep and to forget them.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Julia to Maria.

WHAT do you tell me! Savillon in Paris! unmarried, unengaged, raving of Julia! Hide me from myself, Maria, hide me from myself—Am I not the wife of Montauban?—

Yes, and I know that character which, as the wife of Montauban, I have to support: her husband's honour and her own are in the breast of Julia. My heart swells, while I think of the station in which I am placed.—Relentless honour! thou triest me to the uttermost; thou enjoinest me to think no more of such a being as Savillon.

But can I think of him no more?—Cruel remembrances!—Thou too, my friend, betrayest me; you dare not trust me with the whole scene; but you tell me enough.—I see him, I see him now! He came, unconscious of what fortune had made of me; he came elate with the hopes of sharing with his Julia, that wealth which propitious Heaven had bestowed on him.—She is married to another!—I see him start back in amazement and despair; his eyes wild and haggard, his voice lost in the throb of astonishment! He thinks on the shadows which his fond hopes had reared—the dreams of happiness!—Say not that he wept at the thought.—Had those tears fallen upon Julia's grave, memory! thou couldst not thus have stung me. But, perhaps, gentle as his nature is, he was not weak enough to be overcome by the thought. Could he but think of me with indifference—Tell him, Maria, what a wretch I am: a wife, without a wife's affection, to whom life has lost its relish, and virtue its reward. Let him hate me, I deserve his scorn—yet, methinks, I may claim his pity.

The daughter of Roubigné, the wife of Montauban! I will not bear to be pitied. No; I will stifle the grief that would betray me, and be miserable without a witness. This heart shall break, this proud heart, without suffering a sigh to relieve it.

Alas! my friend, it will not be.—That picture, Maria, that picture!—Why did I not banish it from my sight? too amiable Savillon! Look there, look there! in that eye there is no scorn, no reproach to the unhappy Julia: mildness and melancholy!—We were born to be miserable!—Think'st thou, Maria, that at this moment—it is possible—he is gazing thus on the resemblance of one, whose ill-fated rashness has undone herself and him!—Will he thus weep over it as I do? Will he pardon my offences, and thus press it?—I dare not: this bosom is the property of Montauban.—Tears are all I have to bestow. Is there guilt in those tears? Heaven knows, I cannot help weeping.

I was interrupted by the voice of my husband giving some orders to his servant at the door of my apartment. He entered with a look of gaiety; but I fear, by the change of his countenance, that he observed my tears. I clapped on my hat to hide them, and told him, as well as I could, that I was going to walk. He suffered me to leave him, without any further question. I strolled I knew not whither, till I found myself by the side of a little brook, about a quarter of a mile's distance from the house. The stillness of noon, broken only by the gentle murmurings of the water, and the quiet hum of the bees that hung on the wild flowers around it; these gave me back myself, and allowed me the languor of thought; my tears fell without control, and almost without distress. I would have looked again on the picture of Savillon,

for I could then have trusted myself with the sight of it; but I had left it behind in my chamber. The thoughts of its being seen by my husband gave wings to my return. I hope he missed it; for I found it lying, as I had left it, on my dressing-table, in the midst of some letters of compliment, which had been thrown carelessly there the day before; and, when I went down stairs, I discovered nothing in his behaviour that should have followed such a discovery. On the contrary, I think, he seemed more pleased than usual, and was particularly attentive to me. I felt his kindness a reproach, and my endeavours to return it sat awkwardly upon me. There was a treachery, methought, in my attempts to please him; and, I fear, the greater ease I meant to assume in making those attempts, I gave them only more the appearance of constraint.

What a situation is mine! to wear the appearance of serenity, while my heart is wretched; and the dissimulation of guilt, though my soul is unconscious of a crime! there is something predictive in my mind, that tells me I shall not long be thus; but I am sick of conjecture, as I am bereft of hope, and only satisfy myself with concluding, that, in the most faithful lives, there is still a certain point where the maze of destiny can bewilder no more!

LETTER XXXIX.

Montauban to Segarva.

Segarva!—but it must be told—I blush even telling it to thee—have I lived to this? that thou shouldst hear the name of Montauban coupled with dishonour!

I came into my wife's room yesterday morning, somewhat unexpectedly. I observed she had been weeping, though she put on her hat to conceal it, and

spoke in a tone of voice affectedly indifferent. Presently she went out on pretence of walking; I staid behind, not without surprise at her tears, though, I think, without suspicion: when turning over (in the careless way one does in musing) some loose papers on her dressing-table, I found the picture of a young man in miniature, the glass of which was still wet with the tears she had shed on it. I have but a confused remembrance of my feelings at the time; there was a bewildered pause of thought, as if I had waked in another world. My faithful Lonquillez happened to enter the room at that moment; Look there, said I, holding out the picture without knowing what I did; he held it in his hand, and turning it, read on the back, Savillon. I started at that sound, and snatched the picture from him; I believe he spoke somewhat, expressing his surprise at my emotion; I know not what it was, nor what my answer; he was retiring from the chamber—I called him back.—I think, said I, thou lovest thy master, and wouldst serve him if thou couldst?—With my life! answered Lonquillez.—The warmth of his manner touched me: I think I laid my hand on my sword. Savillon! I repeated the name.—I have heard of him, said Lonquillez.—Heard of him!—I heard Le Blanc talk of him a few days ago.—And what did he say of him?—He said he had heard of this gentleman's arrival from the West-Indies, from his own nephew, who had just come from Paris; that he remembered him formerly, when he lived with his master at Belville, the sweetest young gentleman, and the handsomest in the province.—My situation struck me at that instant.—I was unable to inquire further.—After some little time, Lonquillez left the room; I knew not that he was gone, till I heard him going down stairs. I called him back a second time; he came: I could not speak.—My

dear master! said Lonquillez.—It was the accent of a friend, and it overcame me.

Lonquillez, said I, your master is most unhappy! —Canst thou think my wife is false to me?—Heaven forbid! said he, and started back in amazement.—It may be I wrong her; but to dream of Savillon, to keep his picture, to weep over it.—What shall I do, sir? said Lonquillez.—You see I am calm, I returned, and will do nothing rashly;—try to learn from Le Blanc every thing he knows about this Savillon. Lisette too is silly, and talks much. I know your faith, and will trust your capacity; get me what intelligence you can, but beware of showing the most distant suspicion.—We heard my wife below;—I threw down the picture where I had found it, and hastened to meet her. As I approached her, my heart throbbed so violently that I durst not venture the meeting. My dressing-room door stood a-jar; I slunk in there, I believe, unperceived, and heard her pass on to her chamber. I would have called Lonquillez to have spoken to him again; but I durst not then, and have not found an opportunity since.

I saw my wife soon after; I counterfeited as well as I could, and, I think, she was the most embarrassed of the two; she attempted once or twice to bring in some apology for her former appearance; complained of having been ill in the morning, that her head had ached, and her eyes been hot and uneasy.

She came herself to call me to dinner. We dined alone, and I marked her closely; I saw (by Heaven! I did) a fawning solicitude to please me, an attempt at the good-humour of innocence, to cover the embarrassment of guilt. I should have observed it, I am sure I should, even without a key; as it was, I could read her soul to the bottom—Julia de

Roubigné! the wife of Montauban!—Is it not so?

I have had time to think.—You will recollect the circumstances of our marriage—her long unwillingness, her almost unconquerable reluctance—Why did I marry her?

Let me remember—I durst not trust the honest decision of my friend, but stole into this engagement without his knowledge; I purchased her consent, I bribed, I bought her; bought her, the leavings of another!—I will trace this line of infamy no further: there is madness in it!

Segarva, I am afraid to hear from you: yet write to me, write to me freely. If you hold me justly punished—yet spare me when you think on the severity of my punishment.

LETTER XL.

Montauban to Segarva.

LONQUILLEZ has not slept on his post, and chance has assisted his vigilance. Le Blanc came hither the morning after our conversation: Lonquillez managed his inquiry with equal acuteness and caution; the other told every thing as the story of an old man. He smiled and told it. He knew not that he was delivering the testimony of a witness—that the fate of his former mistress hung on it!

This Savillon lived at Belville from his earliest youth, the companion of Julia, though a dependant on her father. When they were forced to remove thence, he accompanied their retreat, the only companion of Roubigné whom adversity had left him to comfort it —but he had his reward: the company of the daughter

often supplied the place of her father's. He was her master in literature, her fellow-scholar in music and painting, and they frequently planned walks in concert, which they afterwards trod together. Le Blanc has seen them there, listening to the song of the nightingale.

I am to draw the conclusion. All this might be innocent, the effects of early intimacy and friendship; and on this supposition might rest the quiet of an indifferent husband. But why was this intimacy, this friendship, so industriously concealed from me? the name of Savillon never mentioned, except in guilty dreams? while his picture was kept in her chamber for the adultery of the imagination!—Do I triumph while I push this evidence?—Segarva! whither will it lead me?

The truth rises upon me, and every succeeding circumstance points to one conclusion. Lisette was today of a junketing party, which Lonquillez contrived for the entertainment of his friend Le Blanc. Mention was again made of old stories, and Savillon was a person of the drama. The wench is naturally talkative, and she was then in spirits from company and good cheer. Le Blanc and she recollected interviews of their young mistress and this handsome elève of her father. They were, it seems, nursed by the same woman, that old Lasune, for whom Julia procured a little dwelling, and a pension of four hundred livres, from her unsuspecting husband. She loved them, said Le Blanc, like her own children, and they were like brother and sister to each other.—Brother and sister, indeed! said Lisette. She was more sagacious, and had observed things better.—I know what I know, said she; but, to be sure, those things are all over now, and, I am persuaded, my mistress loves no man so well as her own husband. What signifies what

happened so long ago, especially while Mons. de Montauban knows nothing about the matter?

These were her words: Lonquillez repeated them thrice to me.—Were I a fool, a driveller, I might be satisfied to doubt and be uneasy; it is Montauban's to see his disgrace, and, seeing, to revenge it.

Lonquillez has been with me: his diligence is indefatigable; but he feels for the honour of his master, and, being a Spaniard, is entitled to share it.

He went with Le Blanc to see Lasune, whom that old man, it seems, never fails to visit when he is here. Lonquillez told her, that Le Blanc had news for her about her foster-son. Of my dear Savillon? cried she. Yes, said Le Blanc. You will have heard, that he arrived from abroad some weeks ago; and I am told that he is worth a power of money, which his uncle left him in the West-Indies.—Bless him! Heavens bless him! cried Lasune. Then I may see him once more before I die. You never saw him, turning to Lonquillez, but Le Blanc remembers him well: the handsomest, sweetest, best-conditioned—your mistress and he have often sat on that bench there—Lord pity my forgetfulness!—it was far from this place; but it was just such a bench—and they would prefer poor Lasune's little treat to all the fine things at my master's—and how he would look on my sweet child!—Well, well, destiny rules every thing; but there was a time, when I thought I should have called her by another name than Montauban. — Lonquillez was too much struck with her words to appear unaffected by them: she observed his surprise.—You think no harm, I hope? said she. He assured her he did not. Nay, I need not care, for that part, who hears me, yet some folks might think it odd; but we are all friends here, as we may say, and neither of you, I know, are tale-bearers, otherwise I should not prattle as I do;

especially as, the last time I saw my lady, when I asked after her foster-brother, she told me, I must not speak of him now, nor talk of the meetings they used to have at my house.

Such were her words; the memory of Lonquillez is faithful, and he was interested to remember.—I drew my breath short, and muttered vengeance: the good fellow saw my warmth, and tried to moderate it.—It is a matter, sir, said he, of such importance, that, if I may presume to advise, nothing should be believed rashly. If my mistress loves Savillon, if he still answers her fondness, they will surely write to each other I commonly take charge of the letters for the post: if you can find any proof that way, it cannot lie, nor deceive you.

I have agreed to his proposal. How am I fallen, Segarva, when such artifices are easy to me!—But I will not pause on trivial objections—the fate of Montauban is set upon this cast, and the lesser moralities must speak unheeded.

LETTER XLI.

Montauban to Segarva.

It is something to be satisfied of the worst. I have now such proof, Segarva!—Inquiry is at an end, and vengeance the only business I have left. Before you can answer this—the infamy of your friend cannot be erased, but it shall be washed in blood!

Lonquillez has just brought me a letter from my wife to a Mademoiselle de Roncilles, a bosom friend of hers at Paris. He opened it, by a very simple operation, without hurting its appearance. It consisted only of a few hurried lines, desiring her to deliver an enclosed letter to Savillon, and to take charge of his

answer.—That letter now lies before me.—Read it, Segarva!—thou wilt wish to stab her while thou read'st it—but Montauban has a dagger too.

"I know not, sir, how to answer the letter my friend Mademoiselle de Roncilles has just sent me from you. *The intimacy of our former days I still recall, as one of the happiest periods of my life.* The friendship of Julia you are certainly still entitled to, and might claim, without the suspicion of impropriety, though fate has now thrown her into *the arms of another*. There would then be no occasion for this secret interview, which I confess I cannot help dreading; but, as you urge the impossibility of your visiting Mons. de Montauban, without betraying *emotions, which, you say, would be dangerous to the peace of us all*, conjured as I am by those motives of compassion, which my heart is, perhaps, but too susceptible of for my own peace, I have at last, *not without a feeling like remorse*, resolved to meet you on Monday next, at the house of our old nurse Lasune, *whom I shall prepare for the purpose, and on whose fidelity I can perfectly rely.* I hope you will give me credit for that remembrance of Savillon, which your letter, rather unjustly, denies me, when you find me agreeing to this measure of imprudence, of danger, *it may be of guilt*, to mitigate the distress, which I have been unfortunate enough to give him."

I feel at this moment a sort of determined coolness, which the bending up of my mind to the revenge her crimes deserve, has conferred upon me; I have therefore underlined * some passages in this damned scroll, that my friend may see the weight of that proof on which I proceed. Mark the air of prudery that runs through it, the trick of voluptuous vice to give pleasure

* The passages here alluded to are printed in *Italics*.

the zest of nicety and reluctance. "It may be of guilt."—Mark with what coolness she invites him to participate it!—Is this the hand-writing of Julia!—I am awake and see it.—Julia! my wife!—damnation!

I have been visiting this Lasune, whose house is destined for the scene of my wife's interview with her gallant. I feel the meanness of an inquisition, that degrades me into the wretched spy on an abandoned woman. I blushed and hesitated while I talked to this old doting minister of their pleasures. But the moment comes when I shall resume myself, when I shall burst upon them in the terrors of punishment.

Whether they have really imposed on the simplicity of this creature, I know not; but her answers to some distant questions of mine looked not like those of an accomplice of their guilt.—Or, rather, it is I who am deceived; the cunning of intrigue is the property of the meanest among the sex—It matters not: I have proof without her.

She conducted me into an inner room fitted up with a degree of nicety. On one side stood a bed, with curtains and a bed-cover of clean cotton. That bed, Segarva!—but this heart shall down; I will be calm—at the time, while I looked on it, I could not; the old woman observed my emotion, and asked if I was ill; I recovered myself, however, and she suspected nothing; I think she did not—It looked as if the beldame had trimmed it for their use—damn her! damn her! killing is poor—canst thou not invent me some luxurious vengeance?

Lonquillez has resealed and sent off her letter to Savillon; he will take care to bring me the answer; but I know the answer—On Monday next—why should I start as I think on it?——Their fate is fixed! mine perhaps—but I will think no more.—Farewell.

Rouillé is just arrived here; I could have wished him absent now. He cannot participate my wrongs; they are sacred to more determined souls.—Methinks, at this time, I hate his smiles; they suit not the purposes of Montauban.

LETTER XLII.

Julia to Maria.

I HOPE, from the conveyance which Lisette has procured for this letter, it may reach you nearly as soon as that in which I inclosed one for Savillon. If it comes in time, let it prevent your delivering that letter. I have been considering of this interview again, and I feel a sort of crime in it towards my husband which I dare not venture on. I have trespassed too much against sincerity already, in concealing from him my former attachment to that unfortunate young man. So strongly indeed did this idea strike me, that I was preparing to tell it him this very day, when he returned from riding and found me scarce recovered from the emotion which a reperusal of Savillon's letter had caused; but his look had a sternness in it, so opposite to those feelings which should have opened the bosom of your distracted Julia, that I shrunk back into secrecy, terrified at the reflection on my own purpose. —Why am I the wife of this man? But if confidence and tenderness are not mine to give, there is a duty which is not mine to refuse—Tell Savillon I cannot see him.

Not in the way he asks—let him come as the friend of Julia de Roubigné.—Oh! Maria! what a picture do these words recall! the friend of Julia de Roubigné! —in those happy days when it was not guilt to see, to hear, to think of him--when this poor heart was

unconscious of its little wanderings, or felt them but as harmless dreams, which sweetened the real ills of a life too early visited by misfortune!

When I look back on that life, how fateful has it been! Is it unjust in Providence, to make this so often the lot of hearts little able to struggle with misfortune? or is it indeed the possession of such hearts that creates their misfortunes? Had I not felt as I have done, half the ills I complain of had been nothing, and at this moment I were happy. Yet to have wanted such a heart, ill-suited as it is to the rude touch of sublunary things—I think I cannot wish so much. There will come a time, Maria (might I forebode without your censure, I should say it may not be distant), when they shall wound it no longer!

In truth, I am every way weak at present. My poor father adds much to my distresses: he has appeared for some time past to be verging towards a state which alone I should think worse than his death. His affection for me is the only sense now quite alive about him, nay it too partakes of imbecility. He used to embrace me with ardour; he now embraces me with tears.

Judge then if I am able to meet Savillon at this time, if I could allow myself to meet him at all. Think what I am, and what he is. The coolness I ought to maintain had been difficult at best; at present, it is impossible. I can scarce think without weeping; and to see that form—

Maria! when this picture was drawn!—I remember the time well—my father was at Paris, and Savillon left with my mother and me at Belville. The painter (who was accidentally in our province) came thither to give me a few lessons of drawing. Savillon was already a tolerable designer; but he joined with me in becoming scholar to this man. When our

master was with us, he used sometimes to guide my hand; when he was gone, at our practice of his instructions, Savillon commonly supplied his place. But Savillon's hand was not like the other's: I felt something from its touch not the less delightful from carrying a sort of fear along with that delight: it was like a pulse in the soul!—

Whither am I wandering? What now are those scenes to me, and why should I wish to remember them? Am I not another's, irrevocably another's? —Savillon knows I am.—Let him not wish to see me: we cannot recall the past, and wherefore, wherefore should we add to the evils of the present?

LETTER XLIII.

Montauban to Segarva.

I HAVE missed some link of my intelligence; for the day is past, and no answer from Savillon is arrived. I thank him, whatever be the reason; for he has given me time to receive the instructions of my friend.

You caution me well as to the certainty of her guilt. You know the proof I have already acquired; but I will have assurance beyond the possibility of doubt: I will wait their very meeting before I strike this blow, and my vengeance, like that of Heaven, shall be justified by a repetition of her crimes.

I am less easily convinced, or rather I am less willing to be guided, by your opinion, as to the secrecy of her punishment. You tell me, that there is but one expiation of a wife's infidelity.—I am resolved, she dies—but that the sacrifice should be secret. Were I even to upbraid her with her crime, you say, her tears, her protestations would outplead the conviction of sense itself, and I should become the dupe of that

infamy I am bound to punish.—Is there not something like guilt in this secrecy? Should Montauban shrink, like a coward, from the vindication of his honour?—Should he not burst upon this strumpet and her lover—the picture is beastly—the sword of Montauban!—thou art in the right, it would disgrace it—Let me read your letter again.

I am a fool to be so moved—but your letter has given me back myself. "The disgrace is only published by an open revenge: it can be buried with the guilty by a secret one."—I am yours, Segarva, and you shall guide me.

Chance has been kind to me for the means. Once, in Andalusia, I met with a Venetian empiric, of whom, among other chymical curiosities, I bought a poisonous drug, the efficacy of which he showed me on some animals to whom he administered it. The death it gave was easy, and altered not the appearance of the thing it killed.

I have fetched it from my cabinet, and it stands before me. It is contained in a little square phial, marked with some hieroglyphic scrawls which I do not understand. Methinks, while I look on it—I could be weak, very weak, Segarva—But an hour ago I saw her walk, and speak, and smile—yet these few drops!—I will look on it no more—

I hear the tread of her feet in the apartment above. Did she know what passes in my mind!—the study in which I sit seems the cave of a dæmon!

Lonquillez has relieved me again. He has this moment got from her maid the following letter, addressed to her friend Mademoiselle de Roncilles. What a sex it is! but I have heard of their alliances of intrigue—It is not that these things are uncommon,

but that Montauban is a fool—a husband—a —— perdition seize her!

'Is my friend too leagued against me? Alas! my virtue was too feeble before, and needed not the addition of Maria's arguments to be overcome. Savillon's figure, you say, aided by that languid paleness which his late illness had given it, was irresistible—Why is not Julia sick?—Yet, wretched as she is, irretrievably wretched, she breathes, and walks, and speaks, as she did in her most happy days!

'You intreat me, for pity's sake, to meet him.—He hinted his design of soon leaving France to return to Martinique.—Why did he ever leave France? Had he remained contented with love and Julia, instead of this stolen, this guilty meeting—What do I say?... I live but for Montauban!

'I will think no longer—This one time I will silence the monitor within me—Tell him, I will meet him. On Thursday next, let him be at Lasune's in the evening: it will be dark by six.

'I dare not read what I have written. Farewell.'

It will be dark by six!—Yet I will keep my word, Segarva; they shall meet, that certainty may precede my vengeance; but when they part, they part to meet no more! Lonquillez's fidelity I know: his soul is not that of a servant: he shall provide for Savillon. Julia is a victim above him—Julia shall be the charge of his master.

Farewell! When I write again, it shall not be to threaten.

I shall not be at home, said he, till supper-time, and Rouillé's shooting-party will detain him till it is late. —The consciousness of my purpose pressed on my tongue while I answered him. I faltered, and could hardly speak. You speak faintly, said Montauban. You are not ill, I hope? taking my hand. I told him, truly, that my head ached a good deal, that it had ached all day, that I meant to try if a walk would do it service. Perhaps it may, answered he; and methought he looked steadily and with a sort of question at me; or rather my own mind interpreted his look in that manner—I believe I blushed.——

How I tremble as I look on my watch! Would I could recall my promise!

I am somewhat bolder now; but it is not from having conquered my fear; something like despair assists me.—It wants but a few minutes—the hand that points them seems to speak as I watch it—I come, Savillon, I come!

How shall I describe our meeting? I am unfit for describing—it cannot be described—I shall be calmer by-and-by.

I know not how I got to the house. From the moment I quitted my chamber, I was unconscious of every thing around me. The first object that struck my eye was Savillon; I recollect my nurse placing me in a chair opposite to where he sat—she left us—I felt the room turning round with me—I had fainted, it seems. When I recovered, I found her supporting me in her arms, and holding a phial of salts to my nose. Savillon had my hands in his, gazing on me with a countenance of distress and terror.—My eye met his, and for some moments I looked on him, as I have done in my dreams, unmindful of our situation.

—The pressure of his hand awakened me to recollection. He looked on me more earnestly still, and breathed out the word Julia!—It was all he could utter; but it spoke such things, Maria!—You cannot understand its force. Had you felt it as I did!—I could not, indeed I could not, help bursting into tears.

My dearest children! cried the good Lasune, taking our hands, which were still folded together, and squeezing them in hers. The action had something of that tender simplicity in it which is not to be resisted. I wept afresh; but my tears were less painful than before.

She fetched a bottle of wine from a cupboard, and forced me to take a glass of it. She offered another to Savillon. He put it by, with a gentle inclination of his head. You shall drink it, indeed, my dear boy, said she; it is a long time since you tasted any thing in this house.—He gave a deep sigh, and drank it.

She had given us time to recover the power of speech: but I knew less how to begin speaking than before. My eyes now found something in Savillon's which they were ashamed to meet.—Lasune left us; I almost wished her to stay.

Savillon sat down in his former place; he threw his eyes on the ground—I know not, said he in a faltering voice, how to thank you for the condescension of this interview—Our former friendship—I trembled for what he seemed about to say.—I have not forgotten it, said I, half interrupting him.—I saw him start from his former posture, as if awaked by the sound of my voice.—I ask not, continued he, to be remembered: I am unworthy of your remembrance—In a short time I shall be a voluntary exile from France, and breathe out the remains of life amidst a race of strangers, who cannot call forth those affections that would henceforth be shut to the world!—Speak not thus,

I cried, for pity's sake speak not thus! Live, and be happy, happy as your virtues deserve, as Julia wishes you!—Julia wish me happy!—Oh! Savillon, you know not the heart that you wring thus!—If it has wronged you, you are revenged enough.—Revenged! revenged on Julia! Heaven is my witness, I intreated this meeting, that my parting words might bless her! —He fell on his knees before me—May that power, he cried, who formed this excellence reward it! May every blessing this life can bestow, be the portion of Julia! May she be happy, long after the tongue that asks it is silent for ever, and the heart that now throbs with the wish has ceased its throbbing!—Had you seen him, Maria, as he uttered this!—What should I have done?—Weeping, trembling, unconscious, as it were, of myself, I spoke I know not what—told him the weakness of my soul, and lamented the destiny that had made me another's. This was too much. When I could recollect myself, I felt that it was too much. I would have retracted what I had said: I spoke of the duty I owed to Montauban, of the esteem which his virtues deserved.—I have heard of his worth, said Savillon; I needed no proof to be convinced of it; he is the husband of Julia.—There was something in the tone of these last words that undid my resolution again.—I told him of the false intelligence I had received of his marriage, without which no argument of prudence, no partial influence, could have made me the wife of another.—He put his hand to his heart, and threw his eyes wildly to heaven.—I shrunk back at that look of despair which his countenance assumed. —He took two or three hurried turns through the room; then resuming his seat and lowering his voice, It is enough, said he, I am fated to be miserable! but the contagion of my destiny shall spread no further.— This night I leave France for ever!—This night! I exclaimed. It must be so, said he with a determined

calmness; but before I go, let me deposit in your hands this paper. It is a memorial of that Savillon who was the friend of Julia!—I opened it: it was a will, bequeathing his fortune to me. This must not be, said I, this must not be. Think not, I conjure you, so despairingly of life; live to enjoy that fortune, which is so seldom the reward of merit like thine. I have no title to its disposal.—You have the best one, returned Savillon, still preserving his composure; I never valued wealth, but as it might render me, in the language of the world, more worthy of thee. To make it thine, was the purpose of my wishing to acquire it; to make it thine, is still in my power.—I cannot receive this, indeed I cannot. Think of the situation in which I stand. I pressed the paper upon him: he took it at last, and pausing, as if he thought, for a moment—You are right, there may be an impropriety in your keeping it.—Alas! I have scarce a friend to whom I can intrust any thing; yet I may find one who will see it faithfully executed.

He was interrupted by Lasune, who entered somewhat hurriedly, and told me, Lisette was come to fetch me, and that she had met my husband in her way to the house. We must part then, said he, for ever!—let not a thought of the unfortunate Savillon disturb the happiness which Heaven allots to Julia; she shall hear of him but once again. When that period arrives, it will not offend the happy Montauban, if she drops a tear to the memory of one whose love was expiated by his sufferings!—Maria! was it a breach of virtue, if then I threw myself on his neck, if then I wept on his bosom? His look, his last look! I see it still! never shall I forget it!—

Merciful God! at whose altar I vowed fidelity to another! impute not to me as a crime the remem-

brance of Savillon!—Thou canst see the purity of that heart, which bleeds at the remembrance!

Eleven at night.

You know my presentiments of evil; never did I feel them so strong as at present. I tremble to go to bed—the taper that burns by me is dim, and methinks my bed looks like a grave!

I was weak enough to call back Lisette. I pretended some little business for her: the poor girl observed that I looked ill, and asked if she should sit by me: I had almost said Yes, but had courage enough to combat my fears in that instance. She bad me good-night—there was somewhat solemn in her utterance of that good-night; I fancy mine was not without its particular emphasis, for she looked back wistfully as I spoke.——

I will say my prayers and forget it: pray for me too, my friend. I have need of your prayers, indeed I have—Good-night to my dearest Maria!

If I have recollection enough—Oh! my Maria!—I will be calm—it was but a dream—will you blush for my weakness? Yet hear me—if this should be the last time I shall ever write—the memory of my friend mingles with the thought!—yet methinks I could at this time, beyond any other, die contented.

My fears had given way to sleep; but their impression was on my fancy still. Methought I sat in our family-monument at Belville, with a single glimmering lamp that showed the horrors of the place, when, on a sudden, a light like that of the morning burst on the gloomy vault, and the venerable figures of my fathers, such as I had seen them in the pictures of our hall, stood smiling benignity upon me! The attitude

of the foremost was that of attention, his finger resting upon his lip.—I listened; when sounds of more than terrestrial melody stole on my ear, borne as it were on the distant wind, till they swelled at last to music so exquisite, that my ravished sense was stretched too far for delusion, and I awoke in the midst of the intrancement!

I rose, with the memory of the sounds full upon my mind; the candle I had ordered to stand by me was still unextinguished. I sat down to the organ, and, with that small soft stop you used to call seraphic, endeavoured to imitate their beauty. And never before did your Julia play an air so heavenly, or feel such ecstasy in the power of sound! When I had catched the solemn chord that last arose in my dream, my fingers dwelt involuntarily on the keys, and methought I saw the guardian spirits around me, listening with a rapture like mine!——

But it will not last—the blissful delusion is gone, and I am left a weak and unhappy woman still!—

I am sick at heart, Maria, and a faintness like that of death——

The fit is over, and I am able to write again; and I will write while I am able. Methinks, my friend, I am taking farewell of you, and I would lengthen out the lingering words as much as I can. I am just now recalling the scenes of peaceful happiness we have enjoyed together.—I imagine I feel the arm of my Maria thrown round my neck—her tears fall on my bosom!—Think of me when I am gone.—This faintness again!—Farewell! farewell! perhaps——

LETTER XLVI.

Montauban to Segarva.

It is done, Segarva, it is done;—the poor unthinking—Support me, my friend, support me with the thoughts of that vengeance I owe to my honour—the guilty Julia has but a few hours to live.

I did but listen a moment at the door; I thought I heard her maid upon the stairs—it is not yet the time.—Hark!—it was not my wife's bell—the clock struck eleven—never shall she hear it strike that hour again!—

Pardon me, my Segarva; methinks I speak to you when I scrawl upon this paper. I wish for somebody to speak to; to answer, to comfort, to guide me.—

Had you seen her, when these trembling hands delivered her the bowl!—She had complained of being ill, and begged to lie alone; but her illness seemed of the mind, and when she spoke to me she betrayed the embarrassment of guilt. I gave her the drug as a cordial. She took it from me, smiling, and her look seemed to lose its confusion. She drank my health! She was dressed in a white silk bed-gown ornamented with pale pink ribands. Her cheek was gently flushed from their reflection: her blue eyes were turned upwards as she drank, and a dark-brown ringlet lay on her shoulder. Methinks I see her now—how like an angel she looked! Had she been innocent, Segarva!—You know, you know, it is impossible she can be innocent.

Let me recollect myself—a man, a soldier, the friend of Segarva!

At the word *innocent* I stopped; I could scarce

hold my pen; I rose from my seat, I know not why. Methought some one passed behind me in the room. I snatched up my sword in one hand, and a candle in the other.—It was my own figure in a mirror that stood at my back.—What a look was mine!—Am I a murderer?—Justice cannot murder, and the vengeance of Montauban is just.

Lonquillez has been with me.—I durst not question him when he entered the apartment—but the deed is not done: he could not find Savillon. After watching for several hours, he met a peasant, whom he had seen attending him the day before, who informed him, that the strange gentleman had set off some time after it grew dark in a post-chaise, which drove away at full speed. Is my revenge then incomplete?—or is one victim sufficient to the injured honour of a husband? —What a victim is that one!

I went down stairs to let Lonquillez out by a private passage, of which I keep the key. When I was returning to my apartment, I heard the sound of music proceeding from my wife's chamber; there is a double door on it; I opened the outer one without any noise, and the inner has some panes of glass at top, through which I saw part of the room. Segarva! she sat at the organ, her fingers pressing on the keys, and her look up-raised with enthusiastic rapture!—The solemn sounds still ring in my ear! such as angels might play when the sainted soul ascends to heaven! I am the fool of appearances, when I have such proofs —Lisette is at my door.

It is now that I feel myself a coward; the horrid draught has begun to operate!—She thinks herself in danger; a physician is sent for, but he lives at a distance; before he arrives—Oh! Segarva

She begged I would quit the chamber; she saw my confusion, and thought it proceeded from distress at her illness.—Can guilt be thus mistress of herself?—Let me not think that way—my brain is too weak for it!—Lisette again!

She is guilty, and I am not a murderer! I go to—

LETTER XLVII.

Monsieur de Rouillé to Mademoiselle de Roncilles.

Madam,

The writer of this letter has no title to address you, except that which common friendship and common calamity may give him.

Amidst the fatal scenes which he has lately witnessed, his recollection was lost; when it returned, it spoke of Mademoiselle de Roncilles, the first, he believes, and dearest friend of the most amiable but most unfortunate Madame de Montauban. The office he now undertakes is terrible; but it is necessary.—You must soon be told that your excellent friend is no more! Hear it then from one who knew her excellence, as you did; who tells the horrid circumstances of her death with a bleeding heart.—Yes, madam, I must prepare you for horrors; and, while the remembrance tears my own bosom, assume the calmness that is necessary for yours.

On the evening of Thursday last, I was told Madame de Montauban was a good deal indisposed, and had gone to bed before her usual time. At a very short and silent supper, I perceived her husband uncommonly agitated, and, as soon as decency would allow me, withdrew and left him. Betwixt eleven and

twelve o'clock (I had not yet gone to bed), one of the maid-servants came to my room, begging I would instantly attend her to the chamber of her mistress, who was so extremely ill, that, without immediate assistance, they feared the very worst consequences. I had formerly a little knowledge of physic, and had been in use to practise it in some particular campaigns, when abler assistance could not be had. I ran down stairs with the servant, desiring my own man to seek out a little case of lancets and follow us. The girl informed her mistress of my being at the door of her apartment. She desired I might come in, and with that smile, which sickness could not quench, stretched out her hand to me. I found her pulse low and weak, and she complained of a strange fluttering at her heart, which hardly allowed her to speak. I was afraid to venture on bleeding, and only gave her a little of some common restoratives that were at hand. She found herself somewhat relieved, and sat up in her bed supported by her maid. Montauban entered the room: his countenance surprised me: it was not that of distress alone, it was marked with turbulence and horror. It seemed to hurt his wife. At that moment she was scarce able to speak; but she forced out a few broken words, begging him to leave the room, for that her illness affected him too much. He withdrew in silence. In a little time, she seemed a good deal easier; but her pulse was still lower than before. She ordered her maid to call Mons. de Montauban again: I dare not trust to future moments, said she, and I have something important to reveal to him.—I offered to leave the room as he entered.—His friend may hear it, she said in a faltering voice. She fixed her eye languidly, but steadily, on Montauban. He advanced towards her with an eager gaze, without uttering a word. When she would have spoken, her voice failed her again, and she beckoned, but with a modesty in

her action, signifying her desire that he should sit down by her. She took his hand; he seemed unconscious of her taking it, and continued to bend a look of earnestness upon her.

When she had recovered the power of utterance, I feel, sir, said she, something in this illness predictive of the worst; at any rate, I would prepare for it. If I am now to die, I hope (lifting up her eyes with a certain meek assurance which it is impossible to paint) I die in peace with Heaven! there is one account which I wish to settle with you. These moments of ease which I enjoy are allowed me to confess my offence, and intreat your forgiveness.

Thou wert guilty then?—exclaimed her husband, starting from his seat. She paused in astonishment at the impassioned gesture he assumed—Speak! cried Montauban, recovering himself a little, his voice suffocated with the word.

When you have heard me, said Julia, you will find I am less guilty than unfortunate; yet I am not innocent, for then I should not have been the wife of Montauban.

When I became yours, my heart owned you not for the lord of its affections; there was an attachment—— yet look not so sternly on me—He, in whose favour that prepossession was formed, would not have wronged you if he could. His virtues were the objects of my affection; and had Savillon been the thing you fear, Julia had been guiltless even of loving him in secret. Till yesterday he never told me his love; till yesterday he knew not I had ever loved him.—

But yesterday!—cried Montauban, seeming to check the agitation he had shown before, and lowering his voice into a tone of calm severity.

For the offence of yesterday, said she, I would obtain your pardon, and die in peace. I met Savillon in secret; I saw the anguish of his soul, and pitied it.

—Was it a crime thus to meet him? Was it a crime to confess my love, while I received the last farewell of the unfortunate Savillon? This is my offence—perhaps the last that Julia can commit, or you forgive!

He clasped his hands convulsively together, and, throwing up to Heaven a look of despair, fell senseless into my arms. Julia would have sprung to his assistance, but her strength was unequal to the effort: her maid screamed for help, and several of the servants rushed into the room. We recovered the hapless Montauban; he looked round wildly for a moment, then fastening his eyes on Julia—I have murdered thee, he cried; that draught I gave thee——that draught was death! He would have pressed her to his bosom; she sunk from his embrace—her closing eye looked piteous upon him——her hand was half stretched to his—and a single sigh breathed out her soul to Heaven!

She shall not die, he cried, eagerly catching hold of her hand, and bending over her lifeless body with a glare of inconceivable horror in his aspect. I laid hold of his arm, endeavouring to draw his attention towards me; but he seemed not to regard me, and continued that frightful gaze on the remains of his much-injured wife. I made a sign for the servants to assist me, and, taking his hand, began to use a gentle sort of violence to lead him away. He started back a few paces, without, however, altering the direction of his eye. You may torture me, cried he wildly, I can bear it all.—Ha! Segarva there!—let them prove the hand-writing if they can—mark it, I say there is no blood in her face—let me ask one question of the doctor—You know the effects of poison—her lips are white—bid Savillon kiss them now——they shall speak no more—Julia shall speak no more!

Word was now brought me, that the physician,

who had been sent for to the assistance of Julia, was arrived. He had come, alas! too late for her; but I meant to use his skill on behalf of Montauban. I repeated my endeavours to get him away from the dreadful object before him; and at last, though he seemed not to heed the intreaties I made use of, he allowed himself to be conducted to his own apartment, where the doctor was in waiting. There were marks of confusion in this man's countenance, which I wished to dissipate. I made use of some expressive looks, to signify that he should appear more easy; and, assuming that manner myself, begged Montauban to allow him to feel his pulse.—You come to see my wife, said he, turning towards him,—tread softly —she will do well enough when she wakes. There! —(stretching out his arm)—your hand trembles sadly; I will count the beatings myself—here is something amiss; but I am not mad.—Your name is Arpentier, mine is Montauban—I am not mad.—The physician desired him to get undressed, and go to bed. I mean to do so, for I have not slept these two nights—but it is better not. Give me some potion against bad dreams —that's well thought on, that's well thought on.

His servant had begun to undress him. He went for a few minutes into his closet; he returned with his night-gown on, and his look appeared more thoughtful and less wild than formerly. He made a slight bow to the physician: I shall see you when I rise, sir.—Rouillé, is it not? addressing himself to me, and squeezing my hand—I am not fit for talking just now, I know I am not—Good night!—I left him, whispering his servant to stay in the room, unperceived, if he could; but, at any rate, not to leave his master alone.

I know not how I was so long able to command reflection. The moment I left Montauban the horror

of the scene I had witnessed rushed upon my mind, and I remember nothing of what passed, till I found myself kneeling before the breathless remains of the ill-fated Julia. The doctor was standing by me with a letter in his hand: it was written by Montauban, and had been found open on the table of his study. Arpentier gave it me, saying, it contained things which should be communicated only to the friends of the count. From it I discovered the dreadful certainty of what I had before gathered from the distracted words of Montauban. He had supposed his wife faithless, his bed dishonoured, and had revenged the imagined injury by poison.—My God! I can scarce, at this moment, believe that I have waked and seen this!

But his servant now came running into the room, calling for us to hasten into his master's chamber, for that he feared he was dead. We rushed into the room together—It was too true: Montauban was no more! The doctor tried, he confessed without hope, several expedients to revive him; but they failed of success. I hung over the bed, entranced in the recollection of the fateful events I had seen. Arpentier, from the habit of looking on the forms of death, was more master of himself: after examining the body, and pondering a little on the behaviour of the count, he went into the closet, where he found, on a small table, a phial uncorked, which he brought to me. It explained the fate of Montauban; a label fastened to it was inscribed LAUDANUM; its deadly contents he had swallowed in his delirium before he went to bed.

Such was the conclusion of a life distinguished by the exercise of every manly virtue; and, except in this instance, unstained with a crime. While I mourn the fate of his most amiable wife, I recall the memory of my once dearly valued friend, and would shelter it

with some apology if I could. Let that honour which he worshipped plead in his defence.—That honour we have worshipped together, and I would not weaken its sacred voice; but I look on the body of Montauban — I weep over the pale corpse of Julia!—I shudder at the sacrifices of mistaken honour, and lift up my hands to pity and to justice.

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END OF THE TWENTY-NINTH VOLUME.

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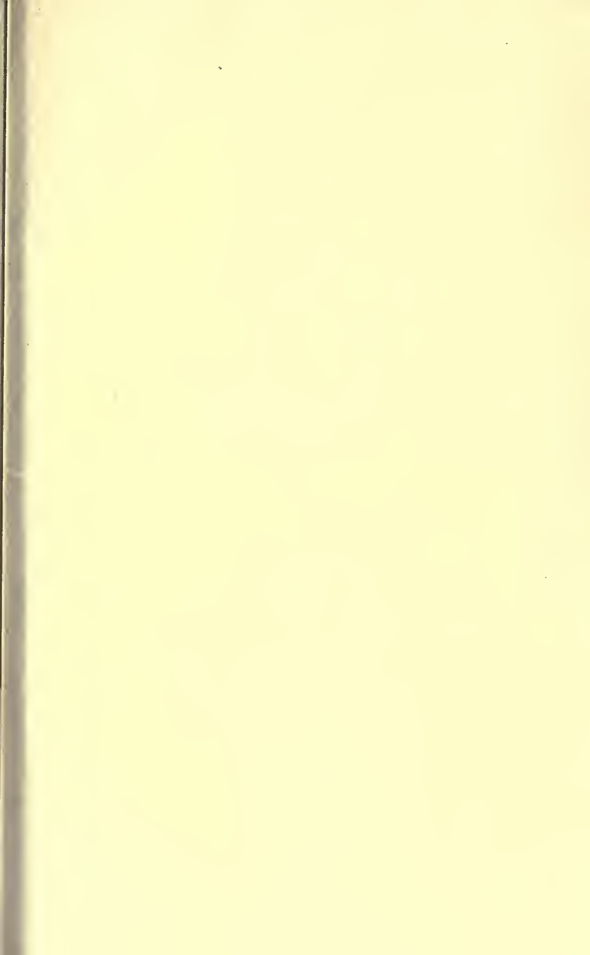

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